

L. L. Bridgman

WOMAN AS SHE SHOULD BE;

OR

MEMOIRS OF

MRS. MENVILLE.

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MRS. MENVILLE.

A NOVEL.

IN FOUR VOLUMES.

BY MRS. PARSONS,

AUTHOR OF ERRORS OF EDUCATION, MISS MEREDITH,
AND INTRIGUES OF A MORNING.

VOL. I.

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WOMAN AS SHE SHOULD BE

CHAPTER OF

MRS. MARY L. L.

OF NEW YORK

BY MISS MARY L. L.

BY MISS MARY L. L.

AS A RESULT OF INVESTIGATION, AND

THE RESULTS OF A

TO

1870

PRINTED BY

AT

NEW YORK

AND SOLD BY



HER ROYAL HIGHNESS

THE DUCHESS OF GLOUCESTER.

MADAM,

THE very high honour you have been pleased to confer upon me, by permitting the following work to be sheltered under your patronage, demands the warmest gratitude a sensible mind can feel.

I will not, in the common dedicatory language, enlarge on those virtues, and that condescending goodness, for which your Royal Highness is so eminently
disting-

distinguished by all who have the honour of being known to you ; for merit generally acknowledged, and never disputed, can receive no addition to its brightness from the feeble, tho' heart-felt, praises of an humble individual : nor can that exalted character, which rather seeks to shun than court popular applause, and finds, in the conscious delight of its own beneficence and generosity, more real gratification than the loudest plaudits could bestow, receive pleasure from adulation. Under this conviction, Madam, I suppress the feelings of my heart from bursting forth into grateful praise.

'Tis with the highest respect and diffidence I presume to solicit your Royal Highness to peruse the following sheets with indulgence. They were written under a painful confinement to my apartment,

partment, when torturing pain threw a cloud over the brightness of fancy, and precluded every attempt to wit or humour. — Conscious of its numberless imperfections, no one can think more humbly of the work than myself. Vanity had no share in the undertaking; and therefore, not arrogating any merit from the performance, I feel myself compelled to entreat a favourable judgment on the only claim I can adduce, that if the story is uninteresting, or the language defective, at least I have sought to inspire a love of truth and sincerity, of an adherence to virtue from principle, which, though for a time it may be oppressed, never can be overcome; and to delineate a noble mind, that can submit to temporal evils, rather than forfeit its dignity and integrity of heart. If my powers have been too weak to do justice to the subject, I hope candour will give me

DEDICATION.

me some little credit for the design:
and if, in a leisure hour, your Royal High-
ness should draw but a trifling amuse-
ment from the perusal, I shall be more
than recompensed for the undertaking.

I have the honour to remain, with
profound respect,

MADAM,

Your Royal Highness's

Ever obliged, grateful,

And most devoted servant,

ELIZA PARSONS.

LONDON,

Feb. 26, 1793.



W O M A N
AS SHE
SHOULD BE.

LETTER I

MRS. MENVILLE TO MRS. BERTIE.

I Received your friendly congratulations, my dear madam, with that secret delight which ever attends self-approbation, and the consciousness of deserving the esteem of our
Vol. I. B friends.

friends. Do not think me too vain in this exultation, when I have done away the surprise you express at my union with Mr. Menville, and exculpated myself from the charge (delicately and obliquely hinted indeed) of levity and change of sentiment, I hope to stand acquitted, in your opinion at least, whatever the censorious world may think of me. But in order to do this, I must go back and briefly retrace some particular circumstances in our family history, with which you are unacquainted, and which have gradually led to the event that now excites the wonder, and perhaps contempt of the inhabitants of this neighbourhood, and doubtless occasions many malignant whispers amongst the small circle of my acquaintance. That grandeur, and ambitious views made no part of my character, I hope you know me well enough to believe, and however present circumstances may appear to contradict that trait I wished to be distinguished by, when the motives which have influenced my conduct are laid before you, I dare promise myself



myself your approbation. Without any apology therefore for the tedious detail I am about to enter upon, I shall call your attention back to the juvenile days of my father.

My grandfather, Sir Anthony Oswald, who had been knighted by the late King, on presenting an address from the county he had the honor to represent; when my father came of age, inherited a small paternal estate of about six hundred a year; his fortune had originally been of twice that value, but the good knight delighted in company, and old English hospitality, and having the misfortune to lose his wife at an early period of life, without any knowledge of œconomy, or the management of a family, his disbursements were entirely submitted to the care of a steward and house-keeper, who found their account in his ignorance, and by almost imperceptible degrees, his old oaks were felled, the lands not entailed, disposed of, and he paid considerable interest for money which the crafty steward pretended to procure, but in

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fact supplied himself. Under such management, no wonder the estate was reduced to less than half its original value, and had not the sudden death of Sir Anthony, by the gout in his stomach, put a stop to their depredations, in all probability my father would have found himself encumbered with an estate, overwhelmed with debts, and such heavy mortgages, as were past redemption. On the death of his father, and dismissal of the steward and housekeeper, he settled his affairs in the best manner possible, and on closing all accounts, found he had about six hundred a year left, an income by no means adequate to his expectations, nor suitable to the expensive education he had received through the generosity of his mother's brother, who being possessed of a very lucrative place under government, lived in a most elegant style, had sent his nephew to one of the first seminaries in England, from thence to Oxford; and when his studies were compleated, sent him abroad to make the tour of France and Italy, from whence he returned only four months

months previous to the death of his father, and just turned of two and twenty years of age. The disorder he found in his affairs, and the little knowledge he had for properly regulating them, compelled him to apply to Mr. Seymour, a gentleman of high eminence in his profession as a lawyer, and yet more distinguished for his worthy character. By the assistance of this gentleman, and the advice of his uncle, his affairs were soon settled, and he was not a little mortified to find his comparative small income so very short of his expectations; but having just reasons to believe his uncle possessed an ample fortune, and that he must at one time or other enjoy it, he endeavoured to reconcile himself to his first disappointment, and confine his expences within the bounds of his income.

During the time of his residence in the country, and his frequent visits to Mr. Seymour, that gentleman's daughter left school, and came to reside with her family. Emily

• WOMAN AS SHE SHOULD BE.

Seymour was about seventeen, with a most amiable person, and blest with a very good heart and an excellent understanding. My father viewed the young lady at first with perfect indifference, having seen and conversed with some of the finest women in the world abroad; the unaffected manners of this young lady, were not likely to captivate a man at his time of life; but frequent interviews, and the many virtues which discovered themselves in her behaviour and conversation, insensibly engaged his attention, and sometimes his admiration; in short, in a very few weeks, he could find pleasure in no society but in Mr. Seymour's family, and became almost an inmate of the house. His uncle had more than once wrote for him to come to town, and was surpris'd a young fellow of spirit should bury himself in the country; but in vain were his persuasions, or remonstrances; the attractions of Miss Seymour had now entirely subdued my father's heart, and being well skilled in observations on the sex, he was persuaded she beheld him

with

with no unfavourable eye. He soon made a declaration of his passion, which was received with a modest reserve, an acknowledgment of the honor conferred on her, and a reference to her parents. Mr. Seymour had four younger children, consequently the fortune he could give his daughter was very moderate; an offer therefore, so advantageous as my father's, was not likely to be refused; it was indeed accepted with transport, and the young lady being authorized by her father, gave her lover no reason to doubt of her preference in his favour. Previous to the completion of the marriage, my father thought it highly proper to acquaint his uncle of his intentions, and invite him down to Oswald Park. This intimation of his design, was not received as he could have wished; a very angry letter announced his absolute refusal of the invitation, and everlasting displeasure, if his nephew degraded himself by a match so unworthy of him; he added, "Your father, by his indolence and extravagance, has reduced the family estate

and consequence, and you, by an imprudent marriage, are going to sink it entirely. Had you come to town, the most brilliant views attended you, and I should have enjoyed the delight of seeing you restored to that opulence your ancestors were distinguished for; but you are your own master; my inclinations are known to you, if yours accord with mine, as I once hoped they did, quit the park, and hasten to town; but if you are determined in your present pursuits, I bid you adieu for ever." This letter from his uncle, gave my father infinite concern, though it made no alteration in his sentiments; he felt the obligations, the grateful ties which bound him to so generous a benefactor, to whom he was indebted for all the advantages of education; but his heart was too firmly fixed in Miss Seymour's possession to be withdrawn, and his wishes being then moderated, and subdued by love, he preferred a competence with her, to all the brilliant prospects his uncle talked of; he flattered himself also, that the old gentleman's displeasure would
not

not be lasting, determined as he was to make every possible submission, and endeavour to obtain a reconciliation. The necessary preparations being soon made, my father was united to the amiable Miss Seymour, whose many virtues and goodness of heart, well justified my father's partiality, and promised fair to ensure his happiness. Soon after his marriage, he made application to be re-instated in his uncle's favour, but the old gentleman was immovable; he resisted every attempt, returned his letters unopened, and forbid my father's name ever to be mentioned in his presence. His nephew, though he painfully felt his disappointment, and deprecated his uncle's displeasure, found too much happiness and consolation in the society of his beloved wife, to permit the loss of his uncle's favour to interrupt his tranquillity, or sour his temper. Things went on in the same calm enjoyment of felicity for some years, during which period my mother brought my father three daughters, who all died in their infancy, to her great affliction; but five

years after their marriage, I was born, the year following my brother Anthony, and within two years after my brother Harry, which was all the children this dear and respectable mother ever had. From the time of my elder brother's birth, a visible alteration took place in my father's disposition, which was still more observable on the birth of his second son; melancholy, peevishness, and a dislike to society, took place of that cheerfulness, that openness of heart, which endeared him to his family, and conciliated the esteem of all his neighbours. My mother beheld with inexpressible grief, the gloom which pervaded his countenance, and the misanthropy which gained fast on his disposition, unconscious of any cause to occasion this strange dejection, she carefully examined all her past actions, dreading lest she had, however innocently, given him offence; but she had no self-reproach to encounter, uniformly good and affectionate, attentive to his smallest wishes, she could charge herself with no one omission of her duties. Happy woman!

man! Oh may your example animate your beloved child to emulate your virtues, may she remember her bright pattern, and in the difficult path she has now to go through, conduct herself with that discretion which must ensure her happiness in this life, and the society of her blessed mother in the life to come! forgive this apostrophe my dear Mrs. Bertie, you knew not the amiable woman whose death I am selfish enough ever to regret, though convinced she is eternally happy. But to return, one day when my father and mother were walking in the park, and his dejection was but too oppressive to her feelings, taking his hand, she summoned resolution to say, "My dearest Mr. Oswald, do not be offended, nor think me impertinently inquisitive, if I entreat to know the cause of that melancholy which has for some time taken place in your bosom, and which with sorrow and anxiety I see daily increase—tell me, I beseech you, have I been unhappy enough to offend you, or has any misfortune with which I am unacquainted befallen you?"

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"No,

" No, my dearest love (returned my father with a deep sigh) No, you have never in word or deed given me a moment's displeasure. I am unhappy, I own, and I will no longer conceal the cause, but repose my griefs in your dear bosom, though alas ! 'tis not in your power to afford me consolation: know then, ever since the birth of our two boys, I have been miserable; 'till then, I felt no regret for the loss of that fortune the prodigality of my ancestors deprived me of; I lamented the loss of my uncle's favour, but I never sighed after his wealth; but now, consider my situation, my eldest son must inherit the very small estate I possess, nor leave a possibility of providing for you or my other children, without burthening him, and reducing him to a situation unworthy of his name and birth; and even then, the slender provision that could be made for those children, must be very insufficient to support them decently, or entitle them to hope for any establishment in life. Added to these melancholy considerations, think by what means
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can I bestow that education on them which becomes their birth, for though not enobled, my family is ancient and honourable, and 'till the present representative, always lived in splendour. Such, my dear Emily, are the anxieties which prey on my mind, and deprive me of rest and peace."

My mother was thunderstruck, she felt the force of my father's reflections, and was incapable of removing the weight of them from his mind; moderate in her desires; no anxiety for riches; no family pride to support, she thought only of bringing up her children good and virtuous, and securing to them a decent independance. Her eyes were now opened, she beheld those dear objects of her care in a different point of view, and conceived she had done them an irreparable injury, by taking advantage of Mr. Oswald's sentiments in her favour, depriving him of his uncle's affection and fortune, and preventing his marrying more suitable to his birth and expectations. Overwhelmed with these

these reflections, she was unable to speak; my father, surprised at her silence, turned, and beheld her drowned in tears; my dearest Emily, said he, for heaven's sake do not weep, I shall never forgive myself for making you unhappy; ah, why can I not suffer without wounding her I love, and whose happiness is the first wish of my heart. "You are too good," replied my mother, "I am the fatal cause of all your distress, I see, I feel I am, but I will henceforth deny myself every superfluity; I will retrench *my* expences, and by the most rigid œconomy, endeavour to save at least what may enable you to educate your children; happy for them, if they had not been *mine* also." My father embraced her in an agony of grief, entreated her pardon, conjured her to forget what had past, assured her he would rise above his gloomy ideas, and endeavour to atone for the uneasy hours he had occasioned her. My mother appeared to be more composed, she tried to be cheerful, and redoubled her attention and affection to him; but the very next day she

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dismissed

dismissed her own woman, and one of the nursery maids; in spite of my father's prayers and remonstrances, she took the care of my brothers and self entirely; she regulated the expences of the family in such a manner, as to give every usual comfort and indulgence to my father, nay even to increase them, whilst she deprived herself of every thing but what was absolutely necessary. In vain were all my father's prayers to prevail on her to alter her plan, she always replied, "I only perform my duty, I find happiness in so doing, do not wish to make me hateful in my own eyes, I live only to see my children properly taken care of. The education of Emily, with your permission, I shall take on myself, except the instructions of a dancing-master, and when our dear boys are of an age to go to a publick school, I hope you will find the expence much less than you expect." Under the eye of this respectable mother was I brought up, ever indulgent and attentive. I found no trouble, no difficulty in obeying her commands, or profit-
ing

ing by her lessons; but my father observed with the most poignant anguish, that her health gradually declined; he wearied himself in endeavours to amuse her; tried to court the society he had neglected, and pressed her to enter more into company; but she always pleaded her engagements with her children, and assured him no society could delight her like his, nor any conversation afford her equal amusement to the prattling of her children. As he could not prevail on her to alter her plan, he disguised his own feelings, and by cheerfulness and good humour sought to disperse that anxiety which he saw too plainly injured her health. Thus things remained till I was about fourteen, my brothers being now of an age to go to a public school, my father one morning was consulting with my mother on the subject, after having agreed with him that it was time to place them abroad, she went to her cabinet, and returning, gave into his hands a paper folded up, saying, " You may remember my dear Mr. Oswald, I once told you that when
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our dear boys were arrived at an age to be sent to school, I hoped you would find their education less expensive than you expected—in that paper, I hope my opinion will appear justified.” My father hastily opened the paper alluded to, and to his infinite surprise, found bank notes to the amount of near eight hundred pounds—good heaven (he cried) how is this, and by what means came this sum into your possession? “By the strict observance of prudence and œconomy,” replied she, with a smile; “you may recollect, from that never-to-be-forgotten day, when I obtained your confidence, I made an alteration in the household, and the expences of the family; you continued to supply me with your usual generosity, I did not refuse what was given me, but constantly laid by all that was superfluous, and in the course of nine years, I have accumulated near twelve hundred pounds, one third of which, with your leave, I will reserve for Emily, but if it can be of any particular use to you, command it without reserve.” Astonishment, for a moment,

ment, deprived my father of the power of speaking, but recovering himself, he embraced her with the warmest affection; his expressions were suitable to her merits, and on that day I well remember, I beheld the most perfect picture of domestic happiness that 'tis possible for the human mind to conceive. My father insisted upon her retaining the money, and only occasionally to assist him whenever he should find the demands for the necessary expences of my brother's education inconvenient for him to discharge. They were sent to Winchester; I had a dancing master, and for a few months a music-master; my mother, who played the harpsichord remarkably well, had herself instructed me, and a few lessons from a capital master, enabled me to play tolerably, and as well as she thought necessary. This period was by far the happiest of my life; my days glided on with peace and serenity; needle-work, history, geography, French, with a little music and dancing, employed all my time, and occupied all my attention; nor was I left ignorant

rant of those necessary duties which are required from a mistress of a family. This happiness was too perfect to admit of duration; my mother's weakness gradually increased, her cough and want of rest and appetite was too visible, though she made light of her complaints; my father dreadfully alarmed, sent to London for the best advice; the physician came, and confirmed all our fears. I will not wound your feelings, my dear madam, by a description of our distress; for six weeks we suffered inexpressible misery, watching the hourly decline of this beloved, this ever dear and respectable mother; and it was one day when sitting by her bed-side, that she recounted to me the particulars I have been relating to you; she added, that animated by the impulse of saving something for the advantage of her children, she had paid a more strict attention to the management of her family; and 'tis incredible, my dear girl, how much may be saved by a prudent oeconomy; for as the largest fortune is insufficient for the demands of extravagance
and

and dissipation, so a very moderate one will answer for all the necessary, and even elegant arrangements in a well regulated family. "You, my dear Emily," (added she with a sigh) "are particularly circumstanced, born of a respectable family; your little portion will be very inadequate to the expectations of such as are on an equality with yourself, and men of small fortunes can ill afford to marry without one, for alas! a union of that sort, where love only is consulted, is productive of a thousand bitter regrets. A young woman therefore should be particularly cautious how she engages her hand or heart, for though riches are by no means absolutely necessary to procure happiness, yet a decent competence, such as may enable a married pair to promise a provision for their children, is really essential to their felicity. Be careful therefore, my dear child, how you engage your affections; let your father decide for you in that important point, and may you live to experience the same heart-felt pleasure I do at this moment, in the exultation of
having

having given my children a virtuous example in their several duties, and in knowing that those dear children have a natural goodness of heart and rectitude of principles."

You will pardon me my dear madam, for this repetition of my excellent mother's words, which are indelibly imprinted in my mind. In about five days after this, her spirit fled to receive, in a blessed immortality, the reward of all her virtues! I must draw a veil over our sorrows; my father was long inconsolable, and reproached himself with having shortened her days, by an anxiety he had *planted in her bosom, and which had destroyed her constitution.*

My sole attention was now directed to my only remaining parent; we saw but little company; the Rev. Doctor Ellis and his family were our chief intimates. That day which brought you on a visit to those respected friends, I shall ever consider as the first happy hour I had known from my mother's death;

death; for though my father was ever kind and indulgent; though Mrs. Ellis and her daughter were good and amiable, yet my heart had not met with one congenial to its own until that evening. Forgive my vanity if I think our hearts flew to meet each other, and a reciprocity of inclination, in a few hours united us more strongly than years of what is generally called friendship. And now having brought down my little narrative to this interesting period, I will close this letter, and to-morrow morning resume my pen; meantime I know I need not desire you to judge favourably of me; one who has had the happiness of being esteemed by you, can never prove unworthy the distinction. Adieu, my dear Mrs. Bertie, my next shall quickly follow, and satisfy all your doubts.

Yours, sincerely,

EMILY MENVILLE.

LETTER II.

MRS. MENVILLE TO MRS. BERTIE.

I Now resume my pen, and proceed in my narrative. You well remember, I dare say, the day on which Captain Harley was presented to us by his friend Mr. Clayton, our neighbour; I shall say nothing of his person or manners; you thought the first agreeable, the latter uncommonly elegant; our hearts were ever in unison, consequently my opinion of both coincided with yours. The marked distinction he paid me then, and in his subsequent visits, was generally observed; my father appeared more pleased with him than any man he had ever conversed with

with, and took some pains to be informed of his family, connexion and fortune; the first he heard was genteel, the other respectable, but that being a younger brother, he had only a small estate, about three hundred a year, besides his captain's commission. His partiality in my favour was too obvious to be overlooked; you perceived it, Mrs. and Miss Ellis did the same, and I will honestly own I was not displeased with his attentions. You were his confidant, and when he seized an opportunity of conveying his sentiments to me, I answered him with candour and sincerity, "I had no particular preference to any gentleman; that I never would receive the addresses of any man but by my father's introduction, who should always decide for me." On this he made application to my father, through Mr. Clayton and Doctor Ellis; he requested time to consider of it; Captain Harley's visits were permitted, though you know I carefully avoided any particular conversation with him. A few days after this my father called me into the library, and
after

after repeating the application made to him, addressed me in these words, " You know my dear Emily, your fortune cannot exceed fifteen hundred pounds at my death, even including the sum your angel mother saved for you, a poor provision for a young woman of family, and too trifling for any man of fortune to think of, therefore neither you nor myself have any right to expect rank or riches; Captain Harley is of a respectable family, master of himself, accountable to no one, he offers you a decent independence at least, and desires your fortune, whatever it may be, shall be secured to yourself. His character is unexceptionable, and I do not think you are entitled to expect a better offer; however, you my dear child shall decide; consult your own inclinations, and they shall govern my determination." I told my father, and told him truly, " that I esteemed Captain Harley, and felt obliged for the honour he did me in his declared preference, but as I had never suffered my inclinations to exceed that decorum every young woman ought to pre-

serve, 'till authorized by her parents, I begged to resign the power of disposing both of my hand and heart to him entirely, convinced he was most capable of judging and estimating the worth of a man of merit, and to such, whenever I gave my hand, my heart must follow."

My father embraced, and praised my sentiments, and the very next day introduced Captain Harley to me in form, with his declared approbation. I will own to you, my dear Mrs. Bertie, that every succeeding interview increased my esteem. You, whose judgment I revered, you, was warm in his behalf, and in a short time I felt no repugnance to the idea of giving my hand to Captain Harley, particularly as he proposed settling in my father's neighbourhood. I desired however the ceremony might be postponed for two or three months, that our dispositions might be better known to each other. It was at this period you was, unhappily for me, called to town by the illness of your aunt,

aunt, but you promised to return, if possible, in time to attend me to the altar. You may recollect, about a week before you left us, we heard Stanmore Hall was sold to a Nabob, a gentleman of immense fortune; as my father saw very few people, and was by no means desirous of new acquaintances, the arrival of Mr. Menville was to us a matter of entire indifference; Doctor Ellis indeed invited him to accompany Mr. Clayton and himself on a morning visit to the hall, but he declined it, and we saw nothing of our new neighbour for near a fortnight after his arrival, 'till one day we had dined with Mrs. Ellis, and in the evening were amusing ourselves with hearing Miss Ellis on the piano forte, a servant suddenly announced Mr. Menville, and in a moment he was in the room; advancing to the Doctor, "My good sir," (said he) "I hope my desire of being introduced to your agreeable family, has not occasioned an improper intrusion?"

"By no means, answered the doctor, you do us much honour by this kind visit," then

leading him to Mrs. Ellis, he afterwards politely introduced him to the company. You will pardon my vanity if I tell you, that from the moment he was seated, his whole attention was rivetted on me; I felt confused at his particular observation, and was much rejoiced when my father arose to retire. Captain Harley, who was with us, mentioned Mr. Menville in very polite terms; my father was lavish in his praise, and said, "I never intended to extend my acquaintance, but there is something in this gentleman which attracts one's esteem; I shall call on him some morning or other."

The next morning, however, he was surprised to hear Mr. Menville was at the gate; he went hastily to receive him, and after spending some time in the library, brought him into my little drawing-room, where I usually set at work, and introduced him to me as a gentleman who was desirous of being considered as a friendly neighbour. He staid above an hour, and engaged us to take a family

family dinner with him the following day, and meet the Ellis family. My father was in high spirits when he left us, I had not seen him so cheerful for many months. I cannot account for a sudden tremor which I felt, nor a dejection which arose on my spirits, in proportion as his seemed elevated; yet I did Mr. Menville justice; he was not a young man 'tis true, he looked near forty, but his person was handsome, his countenance intelligent, and his behaviour exceeding polite; he had resided in India near twenty-two years, and acquired a prodigious fortune, yet appeared neither proud nor consequential; in short, altogether he justified by his manners the prodigious partiality my father avowed in his favour. His visits now were very frequent, his particular attention to me very obvious; poor Harley grew unhappy, he thought my father treated him coldly; he pressed me to shorten his time of probation, and consent to be his; though I felt for his uneasiness, I still thought there was an indecorum in such a hasty marriage, and there-

fore persisted in my former resolution. 'Tis necessary here for me to mention, that my grandfather Seymour died four years before my mother; that his eldest son was settled in London with an eminent barrister; his second placed in the navy, and the youngest sent to India; my mother's sister, a year younger than herself, married a young clergyman who resided at Durham, and died two years after. Thus we had little or no correspondence with any of our relations, except the lawyer, who being now in business for himself, managed my father's little affairs, which required the assistance of a professional man. My father's uncle, who continued always obdurate, had been dead some years, and left his fortune to a distant relation, of the name of Smithson. About this time my uncle, the barrister, having some business in a neighbouring town, came to pay us a visit; we had not seen him for six years, and he paid me a thousand compliments on my improvements; the first evening of his arrival, Captain Harley and Mr. Menville supped with

with us; he was excessively polite to the latter, but barely civil to the former, and I quickly observed by his conversation, had a great aversion to the military; the evening was not a pleasant one, I every moment dreaded a dispute between Harley and him, and saw that I was indebted solely to his esteem for me, that he forebore taking exceptions at some of my uncle's contemptuous remarks on his profession, which were certainly very illiberal. The following morning my father and uncle walked out on a visit to the Hall; Captain Harley called on me, "I see, my dearest Miss Oswald," (said he) "I have not the happiness of your uncle's approbation, but that would occasion me little concern, did I not observe a coldness, almost bordering on incivility, in your father's behaviour, which wounds my very soul: ah, Emily, Why would you not let me profit by his first declared approbation?" I felt for his visible distress, but had nothing to accuse myself with, both delicacy and decorum justified my conduct; I made no scruple to

assure him of my preferable esteem, and at length subdued by his anxiety, and earnest supplications, consented he should apply to my father, to name an early day for our union. He left me in a transport of joy and gratitude—poor Harley! forgive this sigh. My dear madam, the heart that cannot feel the wretchedness it has occasioned, however repugnant to its own wishes, must have very little sensibility, and to you I will not scruple to own, I have made a great sacrifice to my first duty (obedience to a parent) of a very sincere attachment, founded on the merits of the object, and who little deserved the disappointment he has experienced.

But to return—the gentlemen staid dinner at the Hall, and brought Mr. Menville back with them to tea. His behaviour to me was so extremely particular before my father, that I was surprised and confused; after he had left us my uncle observed, that he had never met with a man so sensible, so polite, so well informed as Mr. Menville: my opinion was
asked,

asked, I answered ingenuously, "that he appeared to me a man of great merit;" and great fortune too! cried my father, and that is a prodigious recommendation to merit. I made no reply; I saw there was a little embarrassment in my uncle's manner, but after some hesitation he said, "Pray my dear Emily, how came you to think of encouraging Captain Harley's addresses? a meer soldier of fortune; his estate so trifling, that added to his commission, it is scarce sufficient to supply the extravagances young men of his profession always fall into; I am surprised my brother ever permitted such an improper intimacy, or that you, who know your poor mother fell a sacrifice to her feelings, for the little provision that could be made for her children, should think of incurring the same distress, and in spite of example, be ready to plunge into still greater inconveniences." The mention of my mother made my eyes overflow; when a little recovered, I assured him I never should have received the addresses of Captain Harley, but with my fa-

ther's approbation. "It was an inconsiderate step," (he replied) "and mature reflection has convinced him he did you both a great injury. In short, my dear niece, your connexion with Harley must be broken off." "On what pretence, sir?" said I, much agitated, "Don't be unhappy my dear," replied my father, tenderly, "but I have very powerful reasons for requesting you would drop all thoughts of Captain Harley." I burst into tears, my father arose, and taking my hand, "Retire to your apartment my dear girl, compose yourself, and to-morrow morning at nine meet me in the library; I hope you will then be sensible I have only your real happiness in view." I withdrew without a reply, and past a sleepless night; I anticipated the intelligence I was to meet, and endeavoured to assume a composure in the morning, very foreign to the feelings of my heart. My father was already in the library, and I saw a mixture of concern and tenderness in his countenance; after bidding me sit down, he thus addressed me.

"I need

“ I need not my dear child assure you of my affection and attention to your happiness, nor have I the smallest reason to doubt your love and duty to me ; ’tis my pride and boast that you are the counterpart of your ever dear and amiable mother—hear me therefore with attention, and suffer your reason to be convinced, although your heart may be wounded by the conviction. You know the distress which I have for years experienced, on account of the small provision in my power to make for you and your brother Harry ; you particularly engrossed my cares ; a young woman, well born and educated, without a suitable fortune, is more peculiarly an object of compassion. I therefore ardently wished to see you married, though I thought it full early in life for you to expect any offers of that kind. When Captain Harley made application to me, I considered that my life was very uncertain ; the retired situation we lived in, could not throw you in the way of being much noticed ; and although he could not offer you splendour, it was a decent compe-

tence; I therefore acceded to his wishes, though not with my entire approbation, yet I could form no reasonable objection. Your uncle has opened my eyes to see the unhappy consequences which might ensue from such a union. Officers are generally extravagant; their very situation, their rank, obliges them to be expensive; his fortune could ill support that rank, and the expences of a family, which should be looked forward to, where could there be a provision for children? and still a more dreadful consideration, if he should be called abroad to attend his duty, he might possibly fall; what then must become of his widow and family? What are the miseries endured by the survivors of many brave officers? the trifling pension allowed by government, is inadequate to the support of the widow, and the children must suffer want and wretchedness. I know Emily, you may very naturally observe, such reflections should have been attended to before I had given my sanction to Captain Harley's addresses; I own my error, and lament that you should incur

incur any distress of mind, by my too eager desire to see you settled; but to persist in an error, would be still more blamable; I therefore beseech you, my dear child, to give up your attachment to Captain Harley; I esteem, I respect him, he is a man of sense, I am now going to write to him, and I flatter myself I may answer for your obedience to my wishes."

When my father was silent, I strove to speak; tears opposed my utterance, but observing a kind of angry impatience in his countenance, I collected resolution enough to say, "You have a right to my obedience, sir, and shall have no cause to complain of me." I could say no more, but withdrew with a heavy heart, which felt more for poor Harley than myself. Mr. Menville came to dinner; he was particularly polite and attentive; my dejection was but too visible, though no notice was taken of it. In the evening I received the following letter.

TO MISS OSWALD.

I have this day received a mortal stroke, unexpected and undeserved; Mr. Oswald's letter, which I am given to understand you are no stranger to, has deprived me of every happiness I could expect in life. Oh! my beloved Emily! and must I resign all those fond hopes I have been permitted to indulge? Must I fly the society of her, for whom only I wish to live? What are my crimes?—the want of riches—and is riches then absolutely necessary to happiness? my fortune indeed is small, but it would have been my pride, my glory, by my care and œconomy, to have made that fortune supply my Emily with the little elegancies of life, though not the superfluities—and now must all my delightful visions of happiness be blasted for ever! must I be told, that to marry Miss Oswald would involve her in wretchedness, would beggar her children, and embitter every hour of her life? Can this be true? My soul
shudders

shudders at the idea. Cruel Mr. Oswald! Why, oh why did you not nip my presumptuous hopes in their bud; Why suffer me to nourish every fond idea, and then bid me tear them from my heart for ever? alas! Can that be done? to you my dearest Emily I apply, if to promote your happiness, I must resign my claim, behold me ready to acquiesce, though death should be the consequence; you must determine for me; I will not write your cruel father, 'till I hear from you; but consider, reflect, before you pronounce my doom, for from your sentence I shall make no appeal. Dearest Miss Oswald, let that gentle bosom compassionate the agonies I feel. Suspence is worse than death.

FREDERICK HARLEY.

This letter cost me a flood of tears; at one moment I determined to resist my father's wishes, and preserve my attachment to the ill-treated Harley, but my dying mother's charge upbraided me for even hesitating to perform

perform my duty. "Let your father determine for you in that important point," those were her words, and they shall most religiously be obeyed. I instantly took up my pen, and wrote a few hasty lines to Captain Harley, too expressive I believe of the distraction of my mind, though I signified my resolution to be governed by my father's wishes. I entreated him to quit the neighbourhood for the present, and assure himself of my unalterable esteem, though my duty to the commands of the author of my being, must for ever preclude a further correspondence between us. Having sent off this letter, I strove to subdue my emotions, when I received a summons to supper, and no notice being taken, of my swelled eyes, or loss of appetite, nor the subject at all reverted to, the time past off tolerably 'till the hour of retirement, when my reflections were painful enough. When I entered the breakfast parlour in the morning, my father rose and embraced me; "You are my dear beloved Emily, the darling of your uncle, the pride of my

my family; I have heard from Captain Harley, he is by this time on the road to London; I esteem him more than ever; I am not displeased at your tears (for I could not command my feelings) if you made no sacrifice, there would be no merit in your obedience." True, said my uncle, "My dear niece proves herself the dutiful affectionate daughter you have always represented her, and I am sure will find her own happiness in obliging her friends." I could make no reply, but bowed to him, and endeavoured to recover myself by preparing breakfast. A week passed on without any particular occurrence; Mr. Menville visited us every day, sent us presents of venison, fruit, and East-India sweetmeats, frequently. I took the liberty once to remonstrate to my father, on his acceptance of those presents, but received such an answer, as precluded any farther observation from me. I had struggled to recover my spirits, and disguised my feelings, and saw I gave pleasure by so doing.

About

About ten days after the departure of Captain Harley, my father one morning sent for me to the library ; I obeyed the summons, and on entering, saw he was walking about in some agitation ; “ Sit down, Emily, I have something particular to say to you, my dear, which requires your attention.” I felt my heart flutter, and I trembled without knowing why ; he seated himself opposite to me, and began thus. “ I shall ever remember with gratitude and affection, my dear child, your compliance with my wishes ; you know my motives, and I hope approved of them ; I will now open to you my whole heart. You are well informed of the value of my estate, and that it has been impossible for me to augment it, or even save from it, consequently poor Harry and yourself are unprovided for. Your uncle is in a situation that promises fair for a handsome establishment ; he is already possessed of a decent property ; he offers to take Harry as his son, to enter him into the temple, and amply provide for him, on one condition, which you have

have the power to ratify." "Me, sir?" exclaimed I, "Yes," replied my father, "your brother's future settlement in life, my happiness, and your uncle's favour to the family, are all in your hands; not to keep you in suspense, my dear, Mr. Menville is passionately fond of you; he has made the most splendid proposals to us, and your uncle is so warmly engaged in his interest, that on your acceptance of his hand, rests all his future favour to my children." My father stopt; I was drowned in tears; "let not your obedience to my wishes, Emily, be a partial one; 'tis not sufficient for your happiness or mine, that a union with Captain Harley is given up, to ensure my tranquillity, to make yourself independent and happy; to secure to your elder brother an unincumbered estate and future advantages, and to your favourite Harry his uncle's favour and fortune; all these delightful events depend upon you." "Oh! sir, can I so soon teach my heart to admit another object?" "And can my Emily, the darling pupil of a mother, so tender, so discreet,

creet, so sensible, whose whole life was spent, was devoted to the care of her family, can she hesitate to sacrifice a transient attachment to the happiness of her father, her brother, her uncle, when the offers are so splendid, the gentleman so unexceptionable?" "No, sir," I cried out, "I do not hesitate, dispose of me as you please, I must ever find my own felicity in promoting yours."

My father rose and embraced me, "Now you are the dear amiable girl I ever thought you, and be assured, my dear child, was not Mr. Menville's person and disposition as unexceptionable as his generous proposals, no considerations of self, should induce me to urge your acceptance of him; but I know you will be happy." "It shall be my endeavour, sir, to deserve being so," was all the reply I made. I hastened to my chamber, and having indulged those emotions I tried to repress in my father's presence, for a few moments, I strove to recover myself, and reflect on the preceding conversation. I could
make

make no reasonable objection to Mr. Menville ; in truth, himself and fortune were such as might gratify the wishes of any woman ; but I could not help reflecting, that, but for his offers, in all probability poor Harley would never have been discarded ; and was it generous, was it honourable, to make those offers, when my attachment to Harley was visible and generally known ? this struck me, but I would not suffer my mind to dwell on the idea ; I saw my fate was fixed, and that henceforth it was my business to see all Mr. Menville's actions in the best point of view. That very evening he was introduced to me in form ; I behaved in such a manner as to obtain the praises of my father and uncle. Matters were hurried on very fast ; eight hundred a year was settled on me for my separate use and expences, with a jointure of fifteen hundred pounds. A living in his gift, of four hundred a year, was made over to my brother Anthony in perpetuity ; my uncle took upon himself the care of Harry's fortune, and my father had the delight of seeing

all his family provided for; never was man so happy; I was loaded with presents, valuable jewels and fine clothes; I endeavoured to be grateful, and in the visible happiness of those around me, to find my own.

In less than three weeks after the preparations began, I was united to Mr. Menville, and must with truth declare, 'tis impossible any man can be more attached to a woman, or study more to make himself beloved; I am neither insensible or unjust, I feel grateful for his kindness, and shall make it my unremitting endeavours to deserve a continuance of it. And now, my dear madam, you have my whole story before you, judge me with candour, and if possible, let me stand as well justified in your opinion as I am in my own, I have heard nothing of Captain Harley since his departure, he has my sincerest wishes for his happiness. Mr. Menville talks of visiting town early in the winter, and made an offer of taking me to Bath the end of this month, but I prefer the country at this charming

ing season of the year, and if my dear Mrs. Bertie would favour me with a visit, every wish would be gratified. My uncle leaves us next week, and ~~takes my~~ beloved Harry with him. Anthony soon goes to Oxford. Mrs. and Miss Ellis are my constant guests, and I derive both pleasure and knowledge from such amiable companions. Adieu, my dear friend, do not let me languish for a letter, which must add to my pleasures.

Eyer sincerely yours,

EMILY MENVILLE.

LETTER

LETTER III.

MRS. BERTIE TO MRS. MENVILLE.

YES, my dear friend, yes, you are acquitted: acquitted did I say? I admire, I esteem you a thousand times more than ever; your whole conduct challenges the esteem of the world, and may your father, your brothers, your uncle and friends, rejoice in a continuation of your happiness. Since I wrote you last, my aunt has been exceeding ill; she is getting better, and her physicians have ordered her to Bath; I have promised to accompany her, let me entreat you to accept Mr. Menville's offer and meet me there; what a delightful excursion shall I find it then;

then; think of it my beloved friend, and indulge me.

I am charmed with your little family history, and adore your mother; no wonder you excel all of your sex I have ever yet met with; with such a preceptress, and such an example, how could you be otherwise. I have often thought there was an inequality in your father's disposition, and from Mrs. Ellis heard, that he had formerly appeared to be a very melancholy man; his conduct and apparent dislike of company, is now accounted for, and surely proves his sensibility and attention to his family. I have frequently thought there cannot be a greater misfortune, than for a person to be well born, and deprived of a fortune to support their birth; such people have few opportunities of settling themselves to advantage, young women particularly, and therefore 'tis doubtless the duty of every parent to provide for them if possible in their life time. An acquaintance of mine, who unhappily is descended from a

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noble family, married a gentleman in the medical line, and who was eminent in his profession, consequently they lived in a very genteel style; she had birth, beauty and connexions, but no fortune; however, the latter was not considered necessary by the doctor, good connexions being in his opinion of equal value; they certainly increased his business, and enabled his lady to dress, frequent public places, and have as splendid routs as her titled relations; she had four daughters, they were brought up in the most expensive style; a flimsy French governess to superintend their education, with orders to indulge the dear creatures, for "she could not bear to hear them cry, or see them unhappy." For twelve years they lived in splendour and apparent happiness, at that period the good doctor unfortunately caught a putrid fever in attending a patient, and died in a few days. Her friends assisted her in settling her business and investigating her affairs; my uncle had been one of his most intimate friends, and always believed him to

be

be a man of large property ; judge what must have been the surprise and grief of his lady, when on closing all accounts, there remained less than two thousand pounds for the support of herself and four daughters, exclusive of the furniture and plate, which might be worth about fifteen hundred pounds more ; 'tis impossible to form any idea of her distress ; she had borne the loss of her husband with decent resignation, but she could not support a shock like this ; her violence, her invectives and complaints, were beyond all bounds ; my uncle and aunt endeavoured to sooth her grief, and strengthen her mind ; they advised her to consult her noble relations as to her future settlement ; they *were* consulted, “were extremely sorry for poor Mrs. S——, she ought to have known her husband’s circumstances better, and not have vied with people of ten times her fortune ; it was impossible *they* could be of any service, they had all families of their own ; the best *advice* they had to offer was, for her to turn every thing into money, and retire with her chil-

dren to some distant cheap part of the kingdom, and bring up her daughters in a frugal way." This was the unanimous opinion and advice of her affectionate relations—fired with indignation at this contemptuous treatment, she determined to live no longer in the same kingdom with those she could no more associate with, and being convinced she had a new plan to pursue in the management of her children, the eldest of which was not quite eleven years of age; with the assistance of my uncle all her effects were turned into money, which was placed out to the best advantage, and in a few weeks she quitted England, and was settled at Abbeville in France; her children she sent as day borders to a convent, and by an entire change of sentiments, as meritorious as unexpected, an exact economy in her domestic expences, and devoting her whole time to the care of her children, in about six years she recovered her peace of mind, found satisfaction in performing her duties, added to her little income by her frugality, and had the supreme delight of seeing

seeing her children accomplished and happy. At this period a relation and her good friend died; it was necessary she should return to England to settle her affairs, and her strong attachment to her children would not permit her to leave them behind. My aunt insisted upon their accepting apartments in her house, and there, for the first time, I saw this agreeable family. In a very few months after their arrival, an uncle of the doctor's died, and left his fortune, about five thousand pounds, between the four girls. This pretty addition enabled her to take a small house at Brompton and live respectably. My aunt could scarcely believe it possible a woman so proud, violent and dissipated, should change to a sensible, amiable, companion, an instructive, tender, mother; yet such was, such is, Mrs. S— in every sense of the word: but, alas! she was doomed to feel the ill effects of her former conduct, and experience the bitterest stroke an affectionate parent could sustain. I observed to you, Miss S— was about

eleven years of age when her father died; and that, previous to that event, a French governess had superintended her education. This woman (whose sole recommendation was the language she pretended to be mistress of) was low-minded, vulgar, cringing and artful; she found that to indulge her young pupils was the road to Mrs. S's esteem, and therefore instruction was the last thing thought of. Miss S— was very handsome; her personal charms was a continual theme; her mother's noble birth was another, and Miss was taught to believe she must one day be a duchess at least: she had naturally much vivacity of disposition and a quick understanding. The death of her father, the dismissal of her governess, and the entire change in every department of the household, afflicted her young mind more than could have been expected. During her residence in France she had, indeed, acquired many accomplishments, and an apparent contentment with her situation: but, alas! the seeds of
vanity,

vanity, pride, and dissipation, had been early and strongly implanted in her heart; and though they lay dormant a few years, yet on her arrival in England, being greatly admired, with the small addition to her expectations, and the various scenes of gaiety and dissipation she both saw and heard of, recalled all Madame Rochelle's pleasing visions to her imagination. She knew she was lovely, of respectable birth, and saw no reason why she should not raise her views to the first situation in the kingdom. Mrs. S— was no sooner settled at Brompton, than a few of her relations, influenced, perhaps, by curiosity at first, paid her a visit; and finding her establishment genteel, though not splendid, Lord and Lady R— condescended to honor her daughter with their notice. Mrs. S— deliberated long within herself, whether time and the interest of her family should subdue the resentment she felt for their shameful neglect, of her so many years: she had also another apprehension lest her daughter should

be captivated by the gaieties of the world; but Lady R— was so desirous of Miss S—'s company, and her Ladyship's character in general so respectable, that, in an evil hour, she complied with their joint wishes, and the young lady was permitted to spend a month with her noble relations. She was now just turned of seventeen, a dangerous and susceptible age! With all the pride of conscious beauty and an eager desire to shine in the highest circles, she soon attracted observation and admiration; amongst others, a noble Duke, well known in the annals of gallantry, was particularly charmed with her, nor did she appear insensible to his attentions. Lady R—, no stranger to the Duke's character, was displeased with his particularity, and cautioned her young relation to be on the reserve in her behaviour; she also addressed the Duke, and told him the young lady's situation would not admit of being trifled with, and that the admiration and partiality he discovered towards her, to another person might be of
little

little consequence, but this young creature was new to the world, uninformed, and of small fortune; therefore to inspire her with romantic hopes of a splendid establishment would be cruel and injurious to her and her family." The Duke received this remonstrance in silence, and what passed between him and the unfortunate girl will perhaps ever be a secret. But two days previous to her return home, one morning when Lady R— was going some visits, she declined accompanying her under the pretence of a violent head-ach; but no sooner had the carriage drove from the door than she came down into the hall in a walking dress, and 'tis supposed watched the porter down stairs; but meeting a female servant in the hall, she said, "bid Thomas follow me directly to Mrs. Moleworth's:" and walked off very quick. The servant came to my aunt's and enquired for Miss S—, and being informed she was not there, said he must wait, as the young lady would be there in a minute or two.

no doubt. 'Tis conjectured she must have gone round the corner and got quickly into Bond-street, where no doubt her lover was waiting. The servant waited at my aunt's 'till past five, and then went home under much surprise and vexation; Lady R— had been returned some time, and being informed Miss S— was gone to Mrs. Molesworth's and Thomas with her, was perfectly satisfied: judge her astonishment when he returned without her and heard he had never seen her. The whole appeared to her a premeditated plan of deception. Messengers were dispatched every way without gaining the smallest intelligence: one of the house-maids was missing, and all the young lady's wardrobe gone; which business must have been transacted late in the evening or early that morning. Lord and Lady R— were almost distracted; they deferred communicating their apprehensions to Mrs. S— in the slender hope of more pleasing intelligence; but the following day brought them
a pen-

a penny-post letter from the unfortunate girl to inform them "she had taken a trip to the continent to spend a few months in Italy with the Duke of—, whose honor she relied on, and with whom she hoped to enjoy pleasures of a superior kind to those she could expect in her mother's *sober* retirement at Brompton." It would be impossible for me to describe the distress of Lady R—, much less paint the distraction of her mother when the affair was opened to her: how bitterly did she regret the early part of her education, and curse that pride of birth which had prevented her from placing her daughter in some situation where vanity might have been nipped in the bud, and a laudable industry have occupied her thoughts and prevented all possibility of being thrown into such temptations! My aunt and Lady R— fought to afford her every consolation possible, but for some months she was the most miserable of women. Her unhappy daughter continues to reside abroad; the

Duke

Duke has long since returned to England, and she remained with a foreign Prince. His Grace married soon after his return a very amiable woman, and consideration for her peace has made the family silent as to the injuries of the unhappy Miss S— My friend, her mother, has retired into Devonshire, where she educates her young family on a very different plan, and accommodating them to expect only a mediocrity of fortune and situation; her health is gradually declining, and she never ceases to regret the folly of bringing up young people above the state of their fortunes, and lamenting the fate of those girls of high birth who are without the means of supporting their rank, and who consider every vice pardonable under the sanction of splendor and fashion, and no crime *unpardonable* but poverty.

I know not whether you will think my little narrative interesting or not, but I had just received a letter from my dear Mrs.

S—

S— and her injuries and misfortunes struck my mind most forcibly. I shall be truly happy if your next letter informs me I may expect to meet you at Bath, my aunt ardently wishes to see you; in truth was I not a very generous female I should be less desirous of your company, for wherever *you* appear all others can be but secondary objects, and as I have still a small share of vanity and sometimes proudly look around me with abundant self-gratification from the frivolity of the present race of fine ladies, it requires much friendship and self-denying humility to submit voluntarily to the superiority of another. Give me credit therefore for such an effort of generosity, and reward it by making me supremely happy in your company.

Adieu, my dear friend,

Ever, affectionately, yours,

CHARLOTTE BERTIE.

LETTER

LETTER VI.

CAPT. HARLEY TO THE REV. DOCTOR ELLIS.

Madrid, August, 25, 17—.

DEAR SIR,

THE distraction of my mind on that fatal day I flew from Sudbury, and all my hopes of happiness in this life, can alone apologize for the abrupt leave I took of your amiable family: do me the justice to believe, my dear sir, that I entertain the warmest sense of your hospitality and kindness, and that however dead I may be to pleasure, the hours I have spent with you

you will be numbered amongst my happiest days, and I trust I shall ever treasure in my memory those precepts of virtue and goodness which are enforced and animated by your example.

My worthy friend Clayton accompanied me to London, I may say guided me there, for, indeed, I was scarce sensible of the road we took: to his unwearied endeavors to sooth and subdue my feelings I owe my recovery to reason; his kindness shall not be thrown away, for I will exert myself to deserve *his* friendship and *your* approbation. Yes, my reverend friend, though I must ever remember "such things were, and were most dear to me," I will not indulge sorrow or despair; if I cannot be happy in myself I will enjoy the felicity of my friends, and seek improvement to my mind from the stroke that wounds my heart. We stayed in London until the intelligence reached me my foreboding fears had anticipated; Miss Oswald was united
to

to Mr. Menville! selfish, cruel, man! he knew my pretensions; he knew the delightful hopes I had been permitted to entertain, and never gave me the smallest intimation of his designs to work my destruction. Yet, though unconscious of his treachery, I never could esteem him: my heart revolted at his offers of friendship, and I even upbraided its coldness and injustice to a man of merit. I am his victim, grant Heaven I may be the only one! We must never meet, for, though as the husband of the woman I adored, his person must be sacred, yet I would not trust the impulse of the moment should I see him; to avoid it, therefore, I determined to leave England, and having already visited France, Germany and Italy, I fixed my tour for Spain, where new places and objects might excite my attention and give a diversity to my thoughts. My generous friend offered to accompany me and like another Pylades attend his wretched friend; I had not self-denial enough to re-
fuse

fuse the blessing, though I felt the full extent of the obligation, and he wrote you previous to our leaving England; I had not sufficient fortitude at that time to address you but by proxy. An account of our journey 'till we arrived at Madrid could afford you no amusement, as I was but ill qualified to make entertaining or judicious observations; like an Automaton I was at the command of others and incapable of directing myself. We have been here about ten days, and as Mr. Clayton took care to procure letters of recommendation, we have received many more obliging offers of civility and kindness than I expected from this reserved nation; but 'tis certain their natural formality gives ground daily, and they have acquired a small portion of freedom in their manners from their polite neighbours the French. I try to recover the serenity of my mind, I endeavour to be grateful for the attentions we are honored with, but one dear image triumphs and pursues me
every

every where; I find no pleasure in society, yet dare not indulge myself alone: I have recovered my reason sufficiently to know my duty, but the wayward heart is too refractory to be subdued to the practice of it—what time, the kindness of my friend, and your wife and gentle admonitions may do, I know not, but I promise you to add my best endeavours for that purpose, and that I will never, in thought, word, or deed, deserve to forfeit your invaluable esteem. Present my best and grateful respects to your amiable family, and believe me,

Dear sir,

your obliged,

and grateful, humble servant,

FREDERIC HARLEY.

LETTER

LETTER V.

REV. DOCTOR ELLIS TO CAPTAIN HARLEY.

DISAPPOINTMENT in our best hopes and wishes, my dear young friend, is too often the condition of this life, and we are taught to believe, by frequent and unerring proofs, that such disappointments are calculated to improve our virtues and ultimately turn out for our advantage; for sorrow humanizes the mind and expands the heart to feel for the woes of others: it teaches resignation, compassion, and benevolence; and what are the good effects such virtues may not be expected to produce? Felicity to our fellow-creatures

creatures and self-approbation to ourselves must be the result in a well-disposed mind, and, trust me, *that* mind will derive to itself infinitely more happiness in promoting the good of others, than the highest gratification of his own selfish wishes could ever afford him. Your peace, my dear Harley, is among our first wishes, and I doubt not will shortly be restored; but do not fly into the common modes of dissipating grief and disappointment; let it be the triumph of reason, not the work of folly; let your passions be subdued by religion and reflection, and not drowned by riotous company and diversions; in attending to the dictates of the former you will assuredly surmount your troubles, in following the other you only stifle for a time, a flame which will receive fresh fuel, and in the end consume every good and virtuous thought, and prove the source of *never-ending* sorrow and remorse. Do not be offended at the freedom you invited, but consider the effort I make in writing
this

this letter as a proof of my affection and esteem: the disorder in my eyes daily gains ground and renders writing, which was ever my delight, the most painful employment I can take up; you must therefore be content to change your correspondent, (for we will not give up the pleasure of hearing from one whose happiness we are so warmly interested in), and accept a young female one in lieu of an old male one; in short, my daughter Eliza, with our joint approbation, is henceforth to be my amanuensis, and remember young man the confidence I place in your principles; let your letters to her be the test of your merit, and justify us for the partiality we all feel in your favor. I esteem the worthy Clayton, and recommend you to deserve his uncommon friendship.

I am, dear Harley,

very sincerely yours,

SAMUEL ELLIS.

LETTER

LETTER VI.

MRS. MENVILLE TO MRS. BERTIE.

YOU have confirmed my happiness, my dear friend; your approbation of my conduct has justified me in the judgment I presumed to pass on myself, and I feel highly gratified on looking back without self-reproach and being entitled to look forward with hope. Mr. Menville is ever attentive to please and amuse me; his generosity is unbounded. I have such a quantity of jewels and fine clothes as might turn the head of a vain woman; for my part, accustomed by my mother from my earliest days to neatness and simplicity
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in my style of dress, those gaudy ornaments have no other value with me than as a proof of my husband's affection. Yesterday I met with a little incident that disconcerted *me* and I thought threw a momentary cloud over Mr. Menville's countenance: we were engaged to spend the evening with Dr. and Mrs. Ellis; Miss Shepherd, (who you must remember) a gay rattling girl, came in, just after tea, and after some lively chat suddenly cried out, "what a wicked creature you are, my dear Mrs. Menville, to monopolize the beaux thus; here you have taken our nabob that we were all pulling caps for, and, to complete our mortification, have deprived us of the only two wretches worth looking at, Harley and Clayton: I was told this morning they are gone on a knight-errant expedition to Spain in quest of adventures, that you Doctor was in the secret and had received a letter from the *poor, forsaken, Harley:*" she pronounced those last words with an emphasis and a mali-

malicious smile in my face; I felt confused, and throwing my eyes on Mr. Menville thought his were fixed on me with a curious and very serious expression in them; this observation increased my disorder; the good Doctor, who saw our embarrassment, said, "the gentlemen are indeed in Spain, and I have been favored with a letter from Captain Harley, but as I by no means think myself a fit correspondent for a gay officer or a knight-errant, I have declined the honor intended me." I was a little relieved by the Doctor's answer, and not at all sorry to hear the gentlemen were actually in Spain; for my father having avoided mentioning Harley's name from the time Mr. Menville first addressed me, I had been totally ignorant how he had disposed of himself. Miss Shepherd, however, whether from design or merely for the sake of chat, was not so easily silenced—"what a simpleton (cried she) to throw away his time to so little purpose; I wish he had chosen

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sen me for his correspondent I should hardly have declined the offer, for positively he's a charming fellow and by no means formed to wear the willow; but gold, almighty gold, has more powerful attractions than a red coat and a pretty fellow now-a-days, when vanity makes such large demands for gratification." "We may at least, without breach of charity," said Mrs. Ellis, smiling, "suppose such are *your* sentiments, or you would not sport them thus before company who I flatter myself are no ways influenced by such ungenerous motives." "But, my dear Kitty, don't be so explicit before *un*-married men, for your own sake." "Upon my word, madam," said Mr. Menville, gravely, "I believe the young lady is by no means singular in her opinion; we every day see instances of marriages where interested views are alone consulted in the union." "It may be so," replied Mrs. Ellis, coolly, "but I am happy enough to know no such despicable persons in the small circle of my

acquaintance." "Lord!" cried the giddy girl, "how serious you are upon the subject; what signifies the *motives* for marriage if a woman makes a good wife?" "Pardon me, Miss Shepherd," said Mr. Menville, "if I think it signifies a great deal; I wish to have the affections; the *heart* of my wife, and so would every man of sentiment." "Oh yes!" returned she, "you men of sentiment, of *nice honor*, expect a great deal, without considering whether your own *merits* entitle you to the expectation; but wise men are as easily deceived as other people; and if your wife chuses to take the trouble of making you *believe* you possess her heart, it answers all the purposes of reality, 'till your mighty wisdom and self-consequence discovers the contrary." This strange speech was uttered in a very sarcastic, pointed manner; Mr. Menville reddened, I felt confused, and Mrs. Ellis looked uneasy. "Upon my word Kitty," said Miss Ellis, who had not yet spoke, "you are a strange mad-cap,

cap, and sport very freely on a state you are in hopes some day of entering into with very different sentiments I am sure, and therefore, not to mislead Mr. Menville and Mr. Barlow (the curate, who was present) as to your real character, I beg you will change the subject." "With all my heart," returned she, laughing, "truth is not to be spoken at all times, therefore I have done; and, a-prô-pôs, have a much more delightful subject to descant on: do you know my mother has at length prevailed with my father to take us to London this winter, and we intend going so early as the end of next month; my mother has already written to a friend to get us a ready furnished house, lest the old don should alter his mind." "You forget I am present, I presume, Miss Shepherd," said the doctor. "O! I cry you mercy, sir; I wont say "*old don*" any more: indeed, I am disposed to be a wonderful, dutiful, respectful child, now my wishes are gratified." "There's much merit in that re-

solution, to be sure;" said Mr. Barlow, smiling. "None of *your* sneers, Mr. Barlow; (retorted she) I have at least the merit of speaking my sentiments without disguise, and I believe, my good sir, a great deal of self-love is at the bottom of our very best actions, if they were fairly scanned—what think you, Mrs. Menville; addressing me suddenly, "do *you* believe our actions are entirely disinterested? that we perform our several duties always from principle alone, if contrary to the feelings of our hearts?" "A good mind, my dear Miss Shepherd, I should suppose, would find the performance of its duties the highest gratification of self-love, independent of its claims upon our principles; and 'tis impossible but that the performance of our domestic duties must be closely connected with the feelings of our hearts." "Ah! lord, you are too sententious for me," cried she, "so pray, dear Miss Ellis, oblige us with a lively lesson, or a cheerful song, to raise my spirits, which are getting into
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the humdrums with these old musty morals." Miss Ellis very readily complied, and every one playing in turn, the visit ended without any more particular conversation. In the evening after we returned, Mr. Menville said, Miss Shepherd was a very fine lively girl, and though rather a *little* too volatile there was much truth in many of her observations. I replied, that she had abundance of vivacity, with, I believed, a very good heart, and I dared say, was a very different character from what she led people to suppose by her mirthful disposition. "O!" returned he, "I admire that cheerful spirit—it keeps one alive:" he then asked a thousand questions about her; I told him her father had been an eminent surgeon, and having acquired, as was believed, a genteel competency had given up business four or five years past; her mother was the only daughter of an attorney, long since dead; she had been brought up in an expensive style and was what, in our vil-

lage, we termed a gay lady; though without any reproach on her character, they had a son in the East-India service, and a younger daughter at a boarding-school." Having ended my account of the family, "how comes it (asked he) this family never visited *you*?" I answered, "my father and mother having declined receiving *their* visits, and their manners being entirely opposite, no other intercourse than cold civility had ever taken place between the families." "And *my* attachment to *you*," said he, smiling, "precluded *me* from their attentions, I suppose, however, as I chuse to live sociably I shall encourage the acquaintance when I have an opportunity." I made no reply, for neither the mother or daughter are at all to my taste: the *latter* (having frequently met with her at the doctor's) I have always been upon a civil footing with, though I am persuaded I am not a favorite, for Miss Ellis told me, some time since, she was extremely partial to Captain Harley, but finding he paid

paid no attention to her, when she heard a Nabob had purchased the hall, she flattered herself Harley would soon be eclipsed and that the stranger might fall a victim to her charms. Unhappily Mr. Menville's early prepossession in my favor, and constant visits to our house, precluded the plan she projected from taking place: my marriage and Harley's absence has increased her dislike to me, and consequently I can promise myself no pleasure from the acquaintance: I dare say if I expressed any disinclination to it, my husband would readily give it up, as he is always obliging; but I must appear capricious if I do not assign my reasons, and those I have mentioned above you will readily conceive I cannot give to him; I must therefore be passive on the subject and let him act as he thinks proper. We often reject the means of happiness placed within our power, as I have recently experienced in refusing to visit Bath: how happy should I feel in embracing you there, my dear

Mrs. Bertie, but 'tis impossible now to urge it; after declining my husband's invitation there would be an indelicacy towards him if I wished for the journey because you are there. Circumstanced as I am, it behoves me to be particularly careful that Mr. Menville should believe he has no rival in my heart, nor a wish that he is not master of: I must therefore relinquish the pleasing idea of holding a *personal* communication, and be contented with enjoying as the next possible good, a constant correspondence, which I am persuaded your good-nature and friendship will permit me to enjoy as frequently as your more agreeable avocations will permit. I am truly grateful for your good aunt's wishes, and also for the little interesting narrative:—Ah! my dear, how much is poor Mrs. S— to be pitied, and what an unfeeling wretch is the daughter!

I am ever most sincerely,

your obliged,

EMILY MENVILLE.

LETTER

LETTER III.

MRS. BERTIE TO MRS. MENVILLE.

Bath.

HERE I am my dear friend, and have the pleasure to say my aunt bore the little journey much better than I expected: we have been arrived three days and find there are a pretty large number of our acquaintance here in this seat of pleasure and dissipation; but the friend of my heart is wanting, and that is a void can never be filled up by the votaries of fashion. We have not yet been at the rooms, of course you can expect no entertainment; but I would not omit writing for two reasons, first,

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that knowing my address I might hear from you soon, the other, to give my opinion on the subject of your last letter. I hate that Miss Shepherd, yes I hate her; that she is envious of your excellencies I can easily conceive; few young women have generosity enough to bear with an acknowledged superiority in another, but there appears a malignancy in her heart under the cover of affected levity, she is therefore dangerous; she envies your present situation, and is enraged at the loss of the other gentlemen: beware of her my dear Mrs. Menville—avoid an intimacy as much as possible:—your candid and generous spirit is by no means a match for art and duplicity. Not having the honor of knowing Mr. Menville, I do not presume to form any judgment of him further than one trait in his character has let me into, and on that head I am silent—'tis impossible but he must love and esteem you beyond any woman in the world: were you not superior to

most of your sex, you had never been *his* wife, therefore I will not entertain a doubt of your happiness. I have often thought highly of your delicacy, (for I will not suppose any daughter of Eve can be without curiosity in her composition) as you must have heard that I did not live happily with Mr. Bertie; that you never asked any particulars of my situation, many times I have thought to begin the subject, but shall I confess, self-love and a wish not to lessen myself in your esteem has hitherto prevented the communication; for I do not pretend to exculpate myself entirely from blame, yet as your frankness on a late occasion entitles you to unrestrainedness on mine, I will mortify myself by relating to you the few particulars of my conduct in the three years I was Mr. Bertie's wife, and trust you will judge with the tenderness of a friend, and pardon where you cannot approve.

I lost both my parents (Colonel and Mrs. Moleworth) at a very early age,

when I was too young to know their value; and was so fortunate not to feel their loss from the care and tenderness I have ever experienced in my uncle and aunt's unremitting endeavours to make me happy. My aunt had no children of her own, I was therefore her adopted daughter: the fortune I inherited did not exceed three thousand pounds; soldiers, as your father justly observed, seldom acquire riches, and my parents were young and fashionable, nothing therefore remained for me but my mother's fortune which had been secured to her. This money was placed to the best advantage, and my generous uncle declared neither interest nor principal should be lessened by the expences of my education. The years of my childhood passed in uninterrupted happiness: I had no particular intimates among my own sex, my aunt did not approve of girlish friendships, at an age (she used to say,) when the understandings are not properly informed nor the rectitude of principles assured and established.

stablished; intimacies between young girls often prove dangerous should there be any defects in the heart of either of them; for the same reason she objected to a boarding school education, where in large seminaries it was impossible to expect *all* should be equally good, and one girl of faulty principles or depraved heart might too possibly ruin the morals of fifty: I had therefore the happiness of being brought up under her own eye, and had her precepts and example been the rule of my life I might have been happy; but I inherited a great portion of my father's spirit; I was haughty and impetuous naturally; the kindness of my more than parents scarce ever permitted the faults of my disposition to be visible, and *they* thought me all perfection. When I was seventeen I was introduced into the gay world, and on my account my aunt enlarged her parties and extended her acquaintance: being a new face and a reputed great fortune as heiress to my uncle, I had a numerous
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set of admirers, all equally indifferent to me; but one evening at Lady Paterfon's rout Mr. Bertie was introduced as a young West-Indian of fashion and fortune. His person was remarkably handsome, with all that vivacity and fire in his eyes and motions for which those children of the sun are distinguished. I presently caught his attention, and as the gentleman who introduced him was acquainted with my uncle, he was introduced to us particularly, and received an invitation to accompany his friend to a party we were to have the following day. In short, not to tire you, his visits were constantly repeated—our mutual affection was visible, and his proposals being unexceptionable in about five months after his first introduction we were united with the approbation of all our friends. We lived in a style of elegance few private fortunes could exceed, and every day our affection appeared to increase; but this was a state of felicity that could not be permanent—no uninterrupted happiness can exist

exist in this life. About twenty months after our marriage, he received letters from abroad relative to his estates there, which required his immediate presence; the necessity was obvious and could not be dispensed with; he was miserable, I was not happy: he ventured one morning to breathe a wish that I would accompany him. — He started at the idea of quitting England, and though I truly loved him, refused his request in rather a peremptory manner. he, as lively as myself, cried out hastily, "'tis well, *madam*, I find how little share I hold in your affections since you choose to be separated from me." "The choice, *sir*," I replied, haughtily, "is of your own making; you choose to *leave me*." "How unkind and unjust is that reproach:" said he, softening and taking my hand, "you know, my dear Charlotte, the necessity for my going; a very large share of my property is at stake, and I should do you the greatest injustice to neglect it." "I can see no such necessity: you have
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a large sum in the funds, besides the twenty thousand pounds (which my kind uncle had given me) reserved for my use, and therefore we have sufficient." "Heaven knows" (returned he) "how reluctantly I shall obey this call, but it cannot be given up: I *must* submit to the painful separation if you will not accompany me; but, you, your uncle, the whole world, would despise me if I suffered myself to be wronged and my property lost." "You must do as you please;" I answered peevishly, and immediately left the room. My uncle and aunt were to dine with us; when we met, they saw something had ruffled me, and eagerly enquired the cause; I repeated what had past—my aunt was surprised and vexed: she said, "she hoped Mr. Bertie would not *insist* upon my going:" "dear Madam," (I cried) "*insist*! I should hate him for ever if he asked me a second time when he knows 'tis disagreeable." "Hold, my dear niece," said she, "do not be so hasty; Mr. Bertie has a
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right to your obedience, but I dare say has too much affection and good-nature to press it, if you are unwilling." "'Tis an unlucky affair," added my uncle, "but doubtless your husband is right; he *must* unavoidably go over himself:"—finding this was his opinion, I made no reply. At table Mr. Bertie mentioned his intended voyage, which my uncle approved, though he lamented the necessity for his absence. I was rather fullen though my eyes were ready to overflow: he addressed me with his usual kindness, and told my aunt "that to her affectionate care he must soon leave the treasure infinitely more precious than what he was compelled to seek after. This was the first disagreeable day I had ever known; I felt for his uneasy state of mind, but though I dreaded his absence, I could not consent to quit England and my friends; the subject was never renewed, and in less than a fortnight he parted from me in inexpressible agonies; my grief was little short of his; but *I* had the support of my

my friends, *he* parted with all! I fear, my dear Mrs. Menville, you will blame me and think I had very little sensibility, but I do assure you I suffered extremely and needed all my aunt's kindness to reconcile me to this separation. By the very earliest opportunity I received a letter from him; he had not then reached his destined port, and his melancholy style occasioned a momentary repentance that I had permitted him to depart without me; but I soon reconciled my feelings; I was young, just entered into life, and met with respect and admiration every where: I pursued the dazzling prospect of pleasure with *rather* too much avidity; my uncle and aunt remonstrated now and then, gently, but, conscious of the rectitude of my principles, I imprudently sacrificed the *appearance* of delicacy and decorum, and joined in every festive party proposed to me. I had many dangles; among others, Mr. Howard an elegant young man of fashion was my constant shadow; I was flattered by

by his attention and respect, and certainly treated him with a degree of preference which arose from esteem only, but which the malicious observers of my conduct failed not to put a very different interpretation on; I incurred censures, which the impropriety of my behaviour assuredly justified, but which I was no ways conscious of deserving from the purity of my sentiments. How easily do we deceive ourselves! Innocent of any real criminal affection, I considered only the gratification of my vanity and never attended to the admonitions of my aunt, or that decorum a married woman under my particular circumstances ought to have strictly observed. I had during this time received another letter from my husband of his safe arrival, which gave me unfeigned pleasure; for he was as dear to me as ever, notwithstanding my follies and dissipation, and I anxiously wished for his return. One morning my uncle called on me, and after some indifferent chat, said, "perhaps, my dear Charlotte, you will not be

be pleased with this villanage. I frankly tell you I am come as an admonitor; I see you look grave, niece; young married women think highly of their own consequence, and in general ill brook advice or reprehension; but though your pride may be offended, your heart I know will do justice to my affection and the motives which induces me to hurt *your* feelings by proving to you how severely you have wounded *mine*."—He paused, tears in his eyes—agitated equally by vexation and tenderness, I could only reply, "I beseech you, sir, to go on." "Well then, my dear child, (for as such I have ever considered you) permit me to ask you, if upon reflection and examination of your conduct for some time past, it is such as your reason can approve or the affection you owe to your worthy husband can justify?" I was startled, he went on. "That your heart and person is equally free from guilt I am entirely confident—admiration and the delusive pleasures of the world have misled, but
I trust,

I trust, not corrupted your heart; a very few of your friends may do justice to your principles, but the world in general judge from appearances, and are much more ready to think unfavorably than otherwise; you will not therefore be surprised to hear you are accused of the blackest crimes, of an improper connection with Mr. Howard, and the dissipation of your husband's fortune." "And, who sir, dares accuse me of such horrid crimes?" said I hastily, interrupting him. "Every body who judges of your conduct," replied my uncle, "I hear it every where—your aunt is so mortified by the cruel aspersions you have taken pains to deserve, that she dreads going into company, secludes herself from the world, and considers herself involved in the disgraceful suspicions entertained of you, by having had the care of your education. 'Tis not enough, my dear niece, to be really virtuous, we must *appear* so; 'tis a duty we owe ourselves, our relations, and society in general, to appear what we really

really are, to hold forth an example of goodness, and by the propriety of our conduct to the world, evince the rectitude of our principles. You are for a time separated from your husband, it is not necessary you should renounce the world or its pleasures, but they should be enjoyed with moderation; a particular decency and decorum ought to be observed, and prove that your affection for your husband is not abated by absence—no particular man should be singled out, however innocently, as a constant companion, lest the world and that very man form conjectures to your disadvantage, and the latter entertain presumptuous hopes which may in their consequences make you despicable in your own eyes, after losing the esteem and respect of your friends. Consider all these things, my dear niece, with attention; consider your own reputation, the honor, the happiness of a worthy man who adores you, the felicity of your friends who have only you to look forward to for their peace or misery

miser~~y~~ in this life, all depends on you. You have good nature, generosity, and virtuous sentiments, resume your natural character, my dear Charlotte, be guided by the dictates of an unerring monitor, and you will be all your friends can wish for; you will gain more real admiration even from the gay and dissipated, whilst the good and virtuous will love, respect, and esteem you." My uncle could scarcely articulate his last words for his emotions. I had been almost choaked with mine, and could neither speak nor shed a tear; he saw my situation, he rose and embraced me: "pardon me, my dear niece, forgive the anxiety of your maternal aunt, your most affectionate uncle; I will leave you to your own reflections, and if you wish to see us, on the first summons, your aunt and myself will attend you." As he was about to leave me, I caught his hand, "no my dearest, my best friend, you shall not leave me, permit me to accompany you, I now hate myself and all my follies, let me fly
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to my dear aunt and by confession and repentance obtain her pardon for all the errors of my conduct." My good uncle shed tears of joy. I returned with him and was received by my affectionate aunt with transport and real affection. From that day I saw the follies I had been guilty of in their true light—I gave up all my light frivolous acquaintance, received Mr. Howard's visits but seldom, and never without other company present, and by the attention of my aunt and her respectable friends, insensibly regained my own approbation, by enjoying the esteem of the worthy; this period was by far the happiest I had known from Mr. Bertie's absence, but it was of short duration: a letter I received from him announcing his quick return to England, and having settled his affairs in a very advantageous manner, ought to have given me additional pleasure; but there was a coldness, a formality in the style that alarmed me; I consulted my aunt, she made light of my ap-

apprehensions, but I saw by her countenance I was justified in them. I suffered the most poignant uneasiness for near three weeks, when cruel doubt was lost in miserable certainty—I flew to his arms with real transport—he coldly saluted me with a reserve in his manner that chilled me to the heart; I burst into tears, he seemed moved, and as if to avoid entering on disagreeable subjects, slightly run over an account of his voyage and success in his business: I tried to recover myself, and congratulated him on having settled his affairs *so soon*; he caught the word, and with a sigh replied, “it was indeed much *sooner* than I expected, or I believe was wished for by others; but come,” said he, rising, “I am much fatigued and shall be glad of rest—I accompanied him, he past a miserable restless night; I never closed my eyes; I saw an alteration in him which I could only account for by supposing some officious person had informed him of my former imprudent conduct; I was therefore

resolved to come to an explanation, for my soul sickened at the idea of being thought unworthily of by him, nor could I bear the torture of suspense. At breakfast, when the same sorrow and reserve was visible, I ventured to enquire the cause of it; "neither the cause nor effects can be strange to you, I should think," was all his answer. I told him "that I believed some strong prejudice had taken possession of his mind, but that conscious of my own innocence though I could not exculpate myself entirely from blame, yet it was of such a nature as by no means deserved his present behaviour." Before he could reply, my uncle and aunt were announced, and them he received most cordially; after the first salutations, my uncle turning to me cried, "I congratulate you, my dear niece, on your present happiness." This was too much—I could not restrain my tears, which greatly surprised them. Mr. Bertie rose to leave the room, I stopped him; "stay, sir, and unfold to my best friends how I
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have offended, and wherefore I have deserved your unkind treatment: and do you, my dear aunt, acquaint Mr. Bertie with all my follies; extenuate nothing, let him sit in judgment on my worst actions, let him also know my repentance, and then if he cannot acquit me, let us separate for ever." I flew to my chamber overwhelmed with sorrow—in about an hour my good friends joined me; compose yourself, my dear niece," said my aunt, "your husband is undeceived, and is really no ways to blame, considering the information he has received. Some officious person has painted your conduct in the blackest colours malice could invent; and the same hand informed him of your lavish expenses during the first four months of his absence; I must own, both your uncle and myself were startled at the sums he mentioned; we have, however, I hope, removed the veil of prejudice from his eyes—he is prepared to see you with a different opinion of your conduct, and desires

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nothing more may be said on the subject." I felt humbled and indignant; I scarcely knew if I should follow my aunt, or reject his apology; whilst I was doubtful, he entered the room, and embracing me warmly, "forgive me, my dear Charlotte, *if* I have wronged you, pronounce my pardon and let there be no further drawback on our happiness." "'Tis for *you* to forgive," I replied, melted by his address, "since you are the person wronged, and I deserved to incur your suspicions; but do me the justice to believe, though I have been vain, foolish, and extravagant, my heart has never erred—*that* has always been yours, and yours alone." He appeared much affected, and in the most endearing manner requested all former occurrences should be buried in oblivion. For some days we lived in perfect happiness, but as his return obliged us to mix with the world, I quickly found the seeds of jealousy were rooted in his mind; he watched every look and word of mine with an eye of suspicion;
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if any gentleman addressed me with common civility, his looks were quite furious; he would be peevish and melancholy without assigning any reason—treat his acquaintance with that chilling civility that soon drove them from his house, and then complain of being deserted and neglected. I ventured two or three times to remonstrate and point out the impropriety of his conduct, but his behaviour on such occasions quite terrified me—he would look wild and furious, sometimes snatch me to his arms and cry, “ah Charlotte! I was once too happy, cursed be the time I left England.” At other times he would silence me with a stern air and imprecate himself, me, and all the world; in short we were soon very unhappy; his temper was entirely changed, and, conscious that I had by my imprudence given some colour for his suspicions, I felt mortified and distressed, yet as I made it my unremitting endeavor to please him, to erase every unfavorable idea from his mind, and as I

had recovered the good opinion of my most respectable friends, at times I could scarcely brook his capricious behaviour without resenting it. For many months we went on in this uncomfortable manner; my uncle and aunt saw and pitied my situation, but small was the consolation they could afford me. One day, after a very restless night on his part, he said, with great agitation, "Charlotte, I am about to leave England within this fortnight."—"Good God!" I exclaimed, (much surprised) if that is your intention I hope you will take me with you." "No," replied he, sighing, "*that cannot be*; I believe I have not treated you lately as you deserve; I feel an alteration in my disposition, and I know you are often distressed by my behaviour; do not weep, my dear Charlotte, my absence I hope will not be a long one, and when I return I trust we shall meet more happy than ever." "I see" cried I, "that I am no longer beloved, that you entertain suspicions injuri-

ous to *your* peace and *my* honor; but you wrong me and yourself; never, for a single moment, have I ceased to love you, never have I violated the vows I made at the altar." "I must, I do believe you—" said he, eagerly, "impossible that angel form and delicate mind could forget the reverence due to herself—but my mind is disturbed, I wish for a time to change the scene that I may return to you with recovered spirits, and deserve your affectionate attention: I have an uncle, as you have heard me mention, at Lisbon, I intend going there for a few months." "Ah! take me with you,—” I cried, "do not make me miserable under the idea that you are separated from me by choice—" he was greatly affected, I shed floods of tears, but his resolution was unshaken. Being convinced that my own folly and imprudence had drawn this affliction upon us both, I determined during his absence to reside at my uncle's; he opposed this design, entreated me in the most earnest man-

ner to remain in my own house, uncontrolled mistress of his fortune, but my resolution was fixed, and to shorten my story, the same day he left England, I quitted my house. Happy had it been for me, had I prudently taken that step when he first left me, how many miserable hours, how many bitter upbraidings from my own heart, might then have been avoided! My affectionate friends said and did every thing to console me, and by the first packet I received a letter in the fondest style from Mr. Bertie, which was more efficacious to my peace than all their endeavours. Alas! my tranquillity was of short duration—I impatiently expected the next packet, I heard of its arrival, I had no letters, and was truly miserable: my uncle and aunt, I observed, partook of my sorrow without any exertions to remove it. I caught them several times in low and earnest discourse, and judged there was some secret kept from me; I addressed my aunt and conjured her to disguise nothing, as apprehension and sus-

suspense was worse than death. After some preparation I learnt the dreadful intelligence: a letter had arrived from Mr. Bertie's uncle to mine, with the shocking account that his nephew and three other gentlemen going on a party of pleasure on the river, by some accident the boat was overset—my dear unfortunate husband, with two others, were drowned, the third gentleman being a skilful swimmer was taken up by a vessel. Judge, my dearest Mrs. Menville, what must have been my feelings—I considered myself as the murderer of my husband—I lost my peace, my reason, and for some weeks was insensible to every thing—to the attentive kindness of my friends I was indebted for my recovery, but for many months, sorrow and remorse preyed on my heart and rendered me dead to every sense of consolation; I looked back with horror on my light and frivolous behaviour, and though I could charge myself with no crime, yet the highest degree of imprudence was certainly

imputable to me : the vanity, the coquetry of a married woman is wholly inexcusable, but particularly so in the absence of her husband. The world had been severe in their strictures on my conduct, and the consciousness of deserving that severity, by the little attention I paid to appearances, embittered also by reflection that the censures I incurred had destroyed my husband's peace, driven him from me, and was the cause of his premature death, altogether made me completely wretched. Happy is the wife who can look back without self-reproach when deprived of a beloved husband ! Warned by my example, let not any young woman suppose if she is conscious of no crime, she may indulge the gaiety of her heart, take pride in the admiration she excites, and sacrifice the public opinion to the gratification of her own vanity, with impunity : 'tis not sufficient to be *really* virtuous, 'tis a duty we owe society to *appear* such, and the neglect of it is sure to be attended with the contempt
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of the world, and unavailing repentance to ourselves. My uncle, who dreaded the effect of my grief might destroy my health, proposed going abroad for a year or two, a scheme I gladly assented to, for every object in England was hateful to me. We soon set off for Paris, where I first saw the amiable Mrs. S— whose little story I have related to you: we made a tour through France and Italy, and after a residence abroad of near three years I returned to England in good health and spirits; and though now and then disagreeable retrospections will obtrude, yet time, that universal dispeller of sorrow, has restored my peace. And now, my dear Mrs. Men-ville, I have ventured to shew you how unworthy I am of the kind partiality you have honored me with, but which it is my darling wish by my subsequent conduct to deserve; your very favourable opinion of me has frequently given a pang to my heart from conscious unworthiness, yet, I think I deserve some degree of cre-

dit, I am now but three and twenty and have quite a matronly air which very often subjects me to ridicule, but the five past years of my life has taught me lessons of prudence I shall never forget, because learnt by bitter experience. This enormous packet must go under two covers, I have dedicated a day and almost a night to you; to-morrow I launch into the world, an observer, but I trust, not a partaker of its follies. Write to me very speedily and tell me you love me still if my happiness is dear to you, for this last eighteen months of my life, honored with your friendship, is by far the happiest period of it.

Ever your's,

CHARLOTTE BERTIE.

LETTER

LETTER. IV.**MRS. MENVILLE TO MRS. BERTIE.**

ACCCEPT, my dearest madam, of my warmest thanks for your obliging and much-wished for communications; you have indeed experienced much trouble and sorrow, but I think judge more severely of your own conduct than your worst enemy would presume to do. You could not think favourably of my sincerity if I said you was entirely free from blame, but in my opinion those persons must have very little candour indeed who do not exculpate you from being answerable for the misfortune which befel Mr Bertie, which was surely

fully owing to the impetuosity of his own disposition. I acknowledge with you that a married woman's conduct cannot be too exactly circumspect, and that the illiberality of the world will generally magnify follies into vices very foreign to the heart. My small knowledge of mankind has been hitherto confined to the good and worthy part of it; pray with me, my dear Mrs. Bertie, that I may not experience a more painful acquaintance with it, for I am about to mix with that world which too often corrupts the *best* hearts. Book-knowledge is very insufficient to guard us from its delusions, and my amiable and respected parents, by secluding themselves always in the country, were very incompetent judges of the follies which fashion has stamped into the necessary accomplishments of genteel life. Mr. Menville has lived pretty much in the gay world, and to him I am indebted for my information, to prepare me for the scenes I must soon be a witness of. In short, my dear friend, we are
pre-

preparing for a London journey, (such it is to me who have never been ten miles from my native village) the scheme was suddenly adopted as you shall hear. Two days after I wrote my last letter, I received a card, containing "Mr. Mrs. and Miss Shepherd's compliments and intended themselves the honor of waiting on Mr. and Mrs. Menville the following evening." My husband requested I would join in his request for their company to dinner, as (he said), he hated the formality of an evening visit in the country; I complied, and an answer was dispatched which seemed to give him much pleasure. My father calling in soon after, I mentioned the intended visit, as I knew he would not like to meet them; he appeared very grave, "my dear Emily," (said he) "as 'tis Mr. Menville's wish to be on terms of intimacy with them, you must acquiesce, but I entreat you to extend your acquaintance no farther than common civility requires, they are not characters I approve of; Doctor Ellis from
his

his situation thought himself compelled to receive their visits, but that worthy family do not esteem the Shepherds; proud, designing, frivolous people, they are incapable of friendship, and have no rectitude of principle—obey your husband in receiving them politely, but never seek an intimacy.” I thanked my dear father for his advice, which I promised implicitly to observe. The following day our guests came, drest out in the very extremity of fashion and loaded with ornaments; I received them with civility and attention. “I am extremely happy, my dear madam,” cried Mrs. Shepherd, as soon as she was seated, “I am *particularly* glad of an opportunity *offered* by Mr. Menville, of cultivating a friendly intimacy with you.” “And I,” said the lively daughter, “am rejoiced to see you altogether; I flatter myself if Mrs. Menville mixes more with cheerful people she will get rid of that gravity which sits so ill on a young woman of nineteen, though she *has* become a matron.”

tron." "We are not all blest with an equal flow of spirits, Miss Shepherd, nor has every one that happy vivacity which *you* possess; however you may be assured I shall study to make myself agreeable in the eyes of Mr. Menville and his friends." Ah! lord," (said she) "how sentimental is that speech! do pray, my dear madam, drop formal speeches, and let us enjoy ourselves like old acquaintances of a long date." "You are too lively Kitty," cried the father, stroking down his laced ruffles." "Not at all," exclaimed Mr. Menville, hastily, "I adore such charming spirits." "*Indeed,*" said she, with an expressive smile, "that is beyond my comprehension I own, but one sees wonderful changes every moon." We do indeed, thought I with a sigh, for observation nor the company was not calculated to raise my spirits, on the contrary they were unusually depressed; happily for me the ball was so well kept up between Mr. Menville and his guests, that my silence was, I believe, unnoticed. In the evening
the

the Doctor and family came to tea, which greatly relieved me; with them I *could* talk, and upon the whole we grew a cheerful party. Mr. Menville insisted they should all stay supper, the invitation was accepted—we sat down to cards—Miss Shepherd and Mr. Menville against the Doctor and myself—we were not fortunate, the others played in high spirits. “There is sometimes great shrewdness in old proverbs:” observed Miss Shepherd, “ill luck at cards, foretells good luck in a husband—you prove the truth of the observation, Mrs. Menville, for I think you *never* win. I remember one evening at the Doctor’s, playing against you and your quondam lover, Captain Harley; you neither of you understood what cards you played, and I believe lost pretty considerably.” Judge what were my emotions at this ill-timed remark; I strove to recover myself, and replied in a careless manner, though in a faltering voice, “*not very considerably*, for as I am no adept in cards I seldom play with the hazard of losing much, being

being, as you observe, generally unsuccessful." A silence of some minutes succeeded, which was broken by the Doctor, who rallied himself and me on our ill-luck, "but if we have the proverb on our side, my good neighbour, we have little right to regret the loss of our money." "True Doctor," replied Mr. Menville, in a significant tone, "and I must console myself by pocketing the money, if that same old law is inimical to me." "Ah, you wretch!" exclaimed the young lady, tapping his shoulder, "you are convinced you are fortunate, it is only the poor spinster who has reason to dread her future lot." "The man of your choice then must be insensible, or a brute, if you are otherwise than happy," replied her partner. "Well, now that's very gallantly said;" cried she, "I give you credit, my dear Mrs. Menville, for the politeness of your husband." "Mr. Menville has too much discernment, madam, to think otherwise;" was all my reply. Supper being announced soon after,

re-

relieved me from my disagreeable situation, and having something to do at table, I recovered my spirits. In the course of conversation, Mrs. Shepherd mentioned, with much exultation, their intended jaunt to London.—“What in October?” cried Mr. Menville; “you will find nobody in town ’till after Christmas—don’t think of it, my dear Madam.” “Ah!” said she, “but I have taken a house and therefore we must go now.” “Aye,” grumbled out Mr. Shepherd, “I told you this was an improper time of the year, but you and your girl were so obstinate, you are rightly served.” “Well, Mr. Shepherd, I wish you would be quiet,” cried the Lady, “the fault is yours; I have plagued you ever since you left off business to take us to London, and now we teased you out of your consent, if I had not sent to secure a house, you would, I dare say have changed your mind in another month.” “Very possibly,” answered he, dryly, “and perhaps it would be the better for us all if I had done so before

before the house was taken—however, the less company the less dissipation, and by Christmas you will be safe home again. I hope.” This hope produced an altercation which had like to have ended seriously; for the old man said, the “*first* loss was the best, and it was only forfeiting the rent of the house, and he should save money by keeping them at home.” This speech cooled both mother and daughter, and they appeared contented with the moderate pleasures the season would permit them to enjoy. Before they left us, an invitation was given, and accepted by Mr. Menville, that we should spend the day with them the next but one; I made no objection of course, and the party was settled: thus a violent intimacy was established, equally against my judgment and inclinations; for they are not persons who improve on acquaintance, or are at all calculated to inform the mind of a young married woman almost a stranger to the world. On the day appointed we returned the visit, and

and there, to my no small astonishment, Mr. Menville proposed to me joining their party to London; before I could reply, the mother and daughter, with eager transport, joined in the request, and scarce left me the power of a negative had I been so inclined; but I affected no will of my own, and therefore told the ladies, a request of Mr. Menville's was a law to me, and I should be happy to accompany him when and wherever he pleased. He made me a slight compliment, and then entered largely into the subject of the various delightful modes of killing time in London. He has a very elegant house in Bedford-square; Mrs. Shepherd regretted that their house being in Albemarle Street, she found by his description, the situations were very widely apart.—“Why 'tis rather unlucky, indeed,” cried Mr. Menville, “for as we go entirely to be in a party, we shall be a cursed way asunder: upon my soul I think you had better go with us *en famille*, don't you think so my dear?”

addressing

addressing me, "our house is very large and can accommodate *your friends* with great convenience, and as you are a stranger in town, it will be more comfortable to have companions with you, don't you think so *my love*?" "I can certainly make no objection if the plan is agreeable to you and the ladies," was all my reply. "But what can be done about the house?" asked Mr. Shepherd. "Why, write the people word you don't take it, but will pay the rent 'till it is let, or make any other trifling satisfaction." This mode was readily adopted—the whole family was in high spirits—the Ellis family overwhelmed with surprise, and myself, in contradiction to my feelings, obliged to assume a satisfaction, far, very far, from my heart. At night, when the occurrences of the preceding week were in review before me, they appeared like a dream, so rapid had been the intimacy which, in absolute strangers to each other, had been carried to such a height in so short a time: to have persons as inmates

mates of my house, whose dispositions and manners ill-accorded with mine, could afford me no pleasure in the prospect. It instantly occurred to me, to procure my husband's leave to invite Miss Ellis of our party; I assumed courage and mentioned it—I watched his countenance and saw a momentary gloom on his features, but recollecting, I suppose, how readily I submitted to *his* wishes, he answered me with more kindness than I expected, “by all means, my love, if her company will contribute to your satisfaction.” I felt greatly obliged, and expressed my thanks in a manner that pleased him, for, snatching me to his arms, he cried, with some emotion, “I should be always happy if certain of making *you* so.” I hastened to the Doctor, and strongly solicited permission from him and Mrs. Ellis to invite their amiable daughter. I knew the value of the favor, because it deprived them of their charming companion entirely to oblige me, yet my kind friends accorded to my wishes at the

first word, and with this reason; "I never was more astonished (said Mrs. Ellis) than by Mr. Menville's invitation to the Shepherds, surely they are not persons such as his wife ought to be introduced into the world with, and I wish he may not repent it: their minds and yours are very dissimilar, and I foresee you will be much alone, or dragged abroad against your inclination; to prevent the former Mary shall accompany you, and I am sure, with such a friend as Mrs. Menville, she will partake of both pleasure and improvement." I thanked the dear lady for her kindness, and tripped into the garden with a light heart to find her worthy daughter; she was delighted with the permission I had obtained; "nothing (said she) could make me more happy than your society, but I am much mistaken if your other guests will feel any pleasure from my being of your party—there is too much selfishness in that family to wish for any sharers in their expected happiness." "However that may be,"

be," answered I, "the principal part of my felicity (exclusive of my husband's share in it) must be derived from you." I bid her hasten all necessary preparations, and returned home with great satisfaction. This is the present state of my affairs—the Shepherds know Miss Ellis goes with us but, whatever may be their private sentiments, *express* no dissatisfaction; Kitty is a constant visitor daily.

My dear father was at first greatly chagrined, but with much persuasion I have prevailed on him, to follow us within a fortnight on a visit to my uncle. I impatiently expect to hear of your Bath amusements, write soon that I may hear from you before I leave the country.

Most sincerely your's,

EMILY MENVILLE.

LETTER

LETTER IX.**CAPTAIN HARLEY TO MISS ELLIS.****Madrid.**

WITHOUT intending the slightest disrespect to the worthy Doctor, he must permit me to felicitate myself on the change in my correspondent; yes, my dear Miss Ellis, I embrace with joy the opportunity now offered me of expressing to you the sincere esteem I ever felt from the first moment your amiable character was open to me, and the attention, the kind concern, on your features when I took a hasty leave of you, has left an impressi-

on never to be forgotten. The situation of my mind but ill qualifies me for an entertaining correspondent, yet I will endeavour to divest myself of selfish feelings, and give you some little account of our amusements here.

This city has undergone wonderful changes within these few years ; it was formerly nasty beyond conception, the manners of the people most disagreeably proud and reserved, the men jealous to an extreme, the ladies shut up and excluded from society: such we are told *has been* the customs and manners in Spain, and such it *still is* in some provinces, but in Madrid things are greatly altered: The streets are now sweet and clean, you can walk under balconies without fear of spoiling your clothes, or offending your senses: the Spaniards are no longer gloomy and unsocial; the grandees, particularly, are polite to strangers, (of any degree of rank) make sumptuous entertainments, and unbend as freely as any
English

English nobleman. They are in general very rich, and rather supposed in common matters to be avaricious, yet there is one trait in their character that contradicts the assertion, which is their great humanity to their old domestics; they are never discharged when unfit for service—they are retained in their houses and comfortably provided for without labour, or even feeling the sense of an obligation, since 'tis a customary indulgence—what a lesson to Englishmen! The ladies enjoy nearly as much freedom in their company and conversations as our country-women; they are very striking in their appearance; their figures are graceful, their eyes and hair remarkably fine, indeed the former have so much fire and expression in them that they would be irresistible were it not for one defect which is particularly unpleasing to an Englishman, they have generally very bad teeth and entirely neglect them, the consequence of which is obvious, and destroys the effects of their other charms. They

are very lively, and both sexes distractedly fond of a dance called the fandango, the instant the music begins they quit every other pursuit and fly with such eagerness to the dance as if they had no other business in life.

The Spanish women marry very early, and certainly preserve a decorum of manners which creates respect; but they are by no means secluded from society, and French fashions, customs and manners daily gain ground in Madrid. Their serenades I am particularly delighted with; nothing can be conceived more pleasant than to ramble through different streets and be entertained with little concerts, and sometimes exquisite voices; this gallant mode of expressing admiration to the objects they adore is surely far preferable to the dull customs of other countries, where a real lover, from respect and reverence perhaps, sighs for months in secret without assuming courage to declare his passion; now a serenade

made does the business at once, and cannot offend the delicacy of his mistress.

I have an invitation to dine with Count Ossuana (a grandee of amiable manners and character) to-morrow; he has, I am told, two daughters remarkably handsome, several rencounters have happened from different parties serenading under their balconies, but they are not known to have a favored lover as yet.

Next week a bull-feast is to be exhibited; curiosity will make me a spectator, but at present I conceive 'tis a diversion which will very ill accord with my feelings, for, alas! my dear Miss Ellis, neither absence, change of situation, nor variety of objects can enable me to bear my severe disappointment without eternal sorrow and regret. You know the value of the treasure I have lost, *you* therefore can allow for that heart-felt grief which to another

person might appear ridiculous and extravagant. I have no other consolation than what arises from the consideration that I have sacrificed my happiness to secure her's—may she experience every felicity that riches can procure—may she enjoy that perfect happiness in a married life, it would have been my pride and study to have *procured for her*; and then divested of all selfish wishes, I will rejoice where she has cause for joy, and in her peace and tranquillity endeavour to find my own! Impressed with sentiments like these, I flatter myself my dear Miss Ellis will not scruple to honor me with her confidence, to inform me of the happiness of her friend, and sometimes descend to those little particulars which will ever be interesting to the bosom of friendship, though apparently of little consequence to the eye of indifference: in return, I will be an attentive observer of every occurrence here which is likely to be productive of any amusement to you.

My

My worthy friend Clayton joins me in the most respectful remembrance to the good Doctor, Mrs. Ellis and their fair daughter.

I am, particularly, Dear Madam,

their and your much obliged

and affectionate humble servant,

FREDERIC HARLEY.

LETTER X.

MRS. MENVILLE TO MRS. BERTIE.

London, Bedford-square.

WITHOUT waiting for a return to my last letter, I take up my pen to inform you of our safe arrival yesterday at noon in Bedford-square: we were a large party; Mrs. and Miss Shepherd and their female attendant with Mr. Menville in the coach, Miss Ellis and myself in the chariot, another coach with women servants, my husband's valet, butler, and three footmen on horseback—the weather was uncommonly fine, which, with my agreeable companion,

panion, made the journey delightful, and when we alighted, Mr. Menville observed he had never seen me look so well nor so happy. "And where is the wonder of that?" cried Miss Shepherd, "the very idea of being in London sets every female heart a palpitating with pleasure, and that you know is a great beautifier to the complexion." "Why, indeed" returned Mr. Menville, "you have your full share of the advantage, for you are all animation." She smiled at the compliment, and I did the honors of my house as well as I could, and having, with the assistance of the housekeeper, conducted them to their several apartments, I retired to my own.

The mansion is very large and handsome, the situation airy and pleasant, but to that you are no stranger; 'tis furnished most superbly, and certainly to every indifferent person I must appear uncommonly fortunate in being the mistress of it. Kitty I think seems to take officious pains continually

nually to remind me of my obligations to my husband, by exclamations of Mr. Menville's grandeur, generosity, and my great happiness. I am far from holding riches or grandeur in contempt, on the contrary I enjoy both, as giving pleasure to my dear father in seeing me so well settled, and in having the power often of contributing to the felicity of others; nor have I any objection to a handsome equipage and fine clothes; though I could have been contented without either, it would be affectation in a young woman of my age not to feel some satisfaction in the enjoyment of them; and, were I sure my present situation caused no disquietude in the bosom of another person, I think, I should be very unworthy Mr. Menville's affection if I was *not* happy—but so it is and ever will be in this life, there is always some little bitter ingredient that mixes with our best enjoyments!

I sent this morning to my uncle's, and was much mortified to be informed he and
my

my dear Harry set off for Devonshire; previous to the information I sent of our intention to visit town—I have wrote my father and requested he will still hold his design of coming, and take up his residence with us, but I much fear his objections to part of my family will overrule my wishes.

I must quit my pen as the carriage is at the door to take us to some fashionable shops that we may be equipped in a proper style for the theatre this evening.

Friday Morning, October 5th.

I found it impossible, my dear friend, to resume my pen yesterday; the important employments of chusing caps, hair-dressing, consulting what colours best suited our complexions, with Mrs. Shepherd's troublesome wisking in and out of my dressing-room, left me not a moment to myself for the remainder of the day.

Miss Ellis has been in London before, to her and Mr. Menville there can be nothing new, but to the Shepherd's and myself all was surprise and novelty; yet though a stranger to every scene that presented itself, I, nevertheless, often blushed for my companions, whose troublesome questions and ignorant exclamations, frequently excited a suppressed smile of contempt in the persons who served us, and who indeed were generally so well dressed and so polite, it was with difficulty I could venture to express my wants, or permit them to attend on me; however, the Shepherd's bought a world of finery, and their money with our very elegant carriage and liveries procured us more respect than I am sure our manners entitled us to.

We drove round so many squares and streets that my head was quite giddy with the variety of objects, and I should have thought the town full had not Mr. Menville, at dinner complained *there was nobody*.

body in it! "I don't know what you can do with yourselves," said he, with a discontented air, "there is no *creature* in town, nor any sort of amusement to vary the scene—I wish we had gone to Bath." "Well, and why can't we go then?" cried Kitty, suppose we go there next week?" (my heart beat with hope, but I was silent.) "No," replied he, "'tis not now worth while to make new arrangements, in another month the town will fill a little, 'till then we must make short excursions to Richmond, Windsor, and the neighbouring villages." "O, that will be delightful!" exclaimed she, "don't you approve of the scheme Mrs. Menville?" "Certainly," I answered, "whatever affords pleasure to my husband and *his friends* must be agreeable to me." "Well, for my part," said Mrs. Shepherd, "I think the town full enough now, I am sure we could hardly get served in the shops, and there were people enough in the streets, besides, I doat on plays, and long to see them in London."

don." "Lord, Mamma!" answered Miss, "we shall have time enough to see plays and operas and every other entertainment during *the winter*."

These last words startled me a little; the house they had taken in town was only for six weeks, being engaged to a member of parliament at Christmas, nor was it at all intended they should exceed that time, and Mr. Shepherd was to have been of the party, but no sooner had Mr. Menville offered *his* house than the old man declined going, throwing all the expence of the jaunt from himself, and now they give oblique hints of continuing with us for the winter: another thing which has given me some concern, is, that Mr. Menville has appointed Mr. Shepherd his agent or steward, to manage all his estates in that neighbourhood, receive rents, &c. did you ever know such infatuation and confidence on so short an acquaintance? I know it will vex my father,
but

we have no right to interfere." "Ah! my dear Mrs. Bertie, with all the advantages attending a marriage beyond our hopes and expectations, there are considerable drawbacks; a consciousness of obligation affects a mind of sensibility; the slightest expression of indifference—a careless air—words of no real import, nor perhaps intended to convey any particular meaning, *all* distress a feeling mind, and every day's experience convinces me that an equality in birth and fortune is an absolute requisite to a happy union. But I forget my entertainment at the theatre, to you where there is no novelty there can be no amusement in my remarks—that I wept for the distresses of Mrs. Beverly, or laughed at the lively Beatrice, is but natural; yet I assure you I felt sensations to which before I had been a stranger, and although the house was crowded by well-drest people, and every object was new to me, my attention was so entirely riveted to the stage that I had neither eyes nor ears for any thing

thing else. What exquisite, though opposite, talents does Mrs. Siddons and Mrs. Jordan possess! Whilst I stay in London I am persuaded the theatre will be my favorite amusement. Several gentlemen who knew Mr. Menville came into our box and were introduced to me and *my friends* as my husband calls them, but that is a term *my heart* will never allow them, though I hope never to be deficient in politeness and civility.

This morning Mr. Menville and his guests are gone to the park, I declined being of the party as did Miss Ellis, both being desirous of writing to our friends. I shall send off this letter that you may know of our arrival and write me immediately; but shall resume my pen at every opportunity, journal-wise, and bespeak your advice and correction with the sincerity becoming our friendship, relative to my conduct in this new world, which I enter up-

on

on with reluctance and anxiety. Some gentlemen dine here to-day and in the evening we go to the other theatre. Present my best respects to your worthy uncle and aunt, and believe me always

Your sincere and obliged

EMILY MENVILLE.

LETTER

LETTER XI.

MRS. BERTIE TO MRS. MENVILLE.

Bath.

YOUR letters, my dear friend, have surpris'd, but to deal sincerely with you, have afforded me no pleasure: I am mortified that you should be in London just as I have quitted it, but much more so that such improper companions should be forced upon you; that Miss Ellis is with you is my only consolation, for I dislike the Shepherds exceedingly; I will not say all upon my mind to say, lest you should be displeased at my want of charity, but I am very sorry Mr. Menville has

has entered so warmly into an intimacy which may be productive of much mischief to him; however I will not pre-judge, but wait the event and make my own observations; for *you*, my dear Mrs. Menville, *you* have only to follow the dictates of your own heart, and you can never err.

I have the pleasure to tell you that I think my aunt's health is considerably better; my uncle has a slight fit of the gout which makes him a little peevish, but I hope will have a short duration.

I have been twice at the rooms, the first night with Lord and Lady Lovejoy who introduced to my notice two gentlemen of such opposite characters that I am likely to be greatly amused by the contrast. Sir Charles Wentworth is about thirty, graceful in his person and manners, of a very serious disposition, and with such high sentiments of honor as would qualify him for a Knight-errant were the days
of

or chivalry to be revived; in short he is brave, merciful, strict in his principles, more of a philosopher than the man of fashion, a despiser of the present modes, and only that he is neither so *very* wise nor so *very* formal, a perfect Sir Charles Grandison: he is related to Lord Lovejoy and highly esteemed by him, and is the first man I ever felt myself afraid of; with him you cannot trifle though he is cheerful, nor enter freely into conversation because his understanding and knowledge of mankind appears of the superior kind, and the result of much study and observation, though he never obtrudes his remarks but when called upon. This gentleman I conceive is likely to remain single, half the women in the world he must despise, and the other half are more likely to *fear* than love him.

Mr Gaywell is a young man of very considerable fortune, handsome in his person, a very great beau in his dress, and

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a coxcomb in his manners; idolizes his own pretty figure, thinks ever woman who sees must love him, and with a very shallow understanding is perpetually talking to *display* his white teeth, and betray his ignorance. When a boy his favorite study was romances, and all his knowledge of the ancients is confined to books of chivalty: he lost his father at an early age, and has been educated at home under his mother's eye by an ignorant tutor, who found his own advantage in gaining mamma's esteem by indulging her dear Jacky. Being now of age, in possession of his fortune, his first entrance into the world was last winter in town, where he commenced beau, and some ladies of mamma's acquaintance admiring his handsome face, the poor youth fancied himself an Adonis, and is come to Bath full of conceit, pertness, and a self-assurance of being the admiration of all the gay belles of this fashionable world. Lady Lovejoy having formerly known his delighted mamma, at the pump-room

room one morning renewed the acquaintance, and both she and her son were introduced to me; since which I have met Sir Chales Wentworth and him several times, and they have both been of our private parties. Think what a contrast, Sir Charles views him with pity and complacency, whilst the all-accomplished Mr. Gaywell eyes the other with contempt, and, conscious of his fine clothes and superior fortune, thinks himself the first man in the company, a degree of presumption one would hardly expect from an ignorant youth brought up in the country, yet I have generally observed the most illiterate of both sexes have the largest share of vanity and self-consequence.

My uncle, who enjoys characters more than any man I know, is highly amused with Mr. Gaywell and his mamma, whilst my aunt pities them both, and has two or three time tried to persuade the latter to send her son abroad with a sensible, intelligent

ligent man who was capable of informing his mind; but she cannot bear the idea of a separation, and appears much surprised my aunt should think he wants *any* information. I told my aunt, it was labour-in-vain work to alter her prejudices, and cruel to destroy an illusion which constitutes Mrs. Gaywell's happiness, that of believing her son the handsomest, most accomplished youth of the age; for my part I pay him great attention, and consequently am a most prodigious favorite.

Bath is at present very full of company, but there is no variation in the amusements—the same round every season, that in fact it is only London in miniature. In the next house to ours resides a capital cheesemonger's wife and two daughters, whose showy equipage and high style of dress excited my curiosity to know who they were, for there appeared a something in their manners that did not accord with their appearance; Doctor Frampton, who

knows every body, told me, on enquiry, their names were Hamwood, the father a man of large fortune and extensive business; the mother, a pawn-broker's daughter, with a great deal of money, a large portion of ignorance, vulgarity, and self-conceit: the daughters agreeable enough in their persons, with the common accomplishments of a boarding-school—that is a smattering of *every thing*, but proficient in nothing but vanity; heartily despising their mother, and lady-expectants from the knowledge of their large fortunes and a tolerable portion of self-consequence. This is their second season at Bath, and doubtless they hope yet to captivate some indigent right honorable, or needy Baronet, for a *title*, it seems, *it must be*. From these neighbours, if the term may be allowed at Bath, I shall make some further demands for amusement, occasionally, when tired of Mr. Gaywell. I am charmed, my dear friend, with your intention of writing journal-wise, and I promise you to
pick

pick up all I can for your amusement here :
 meantime I repeat my caution, beware of
 Miss Shepherd—politeness you cannot omit
 in your own house, but particular intima-
 cy even there may be avoided—she is art-
 ful and envious. Adieu, my amiable friend,
 that your happiness may equal your deserts
 is the constant wish of

Your sincere and affectionate

CHARLOTTE BERTIE.

H 2 LETTER

LETTER II.

MRS. MENVILLE TO MRS. BERTIE.

London.

I Finished my last letter with informing you that we expected company at dinner, and were to attend Covent-Garden theatre in the evening; I now resume my pen to give my dear Mrs. Bertie the occurrences of the day.

Mr. Menville and the ladies returned home in high spirits, in time to dress; they had purchased several elegant trinkets, such as necklaces, ear-rings bracelets, &c.
and

and when they joined me in the drawing-room made a most splendid appearance; Miss Ellis viewed them with astonishment, they enjoyed her surprise by significant looks at each other.

Sir William Pritchard and Mr. Colmore were announced and introduced to me and the company, and soon after a Mr. Martin and a Mr. Thurkill completed the party. The two former gentlemen had the appearance of men of fashion, but the other two were exactly the reverse; you will accuse me of weakness perhaps when I own to you that I felt a cold shiver and an antipathy which I could not repress, the moment they were introduced to me, though Mr. Martin payed me very particular attention, and I was displeased with myself for, perhaps, an unjust prejudice which surely is wrong to entertain at the first view of any one. We went to the theatre a large party, and I was extremely well entertained with the Dramatist and Merry

H 3 Mourners.

Mourners.—The gentlemen returned to sup with us, and, to do them justice, were all polite and entertaining; yet I thought Miss Shepherd appeared displeased she did not attract *all* the notice, for she looked quite peevish when any attention was paid to others, and Mr. Colemore was particularly polite to Miss Ellis. We parted at a late hour—the next morning Mrs. Shepherd proposed a party to Richmond, which was agreed on for the following day, almost without consulting me: after breakfast we went to a capital auction in Pall-Mall, which proved an expensive business to Mr. Menville, for besides purchasing some very fine prints and valuable books, he bought a number of expensive toys, a very handsome gold snuff-box for Mrs. Shepherd, a pair of diamond bracelet buckles for Miss; a gold fillagree tooth-pick case for Miss Ellis, and a set of silver dressing boxes for my toilet—in short he layed out near six hundred pounds in what I thought unnecessary things, but I had no
right

right to prevent the disposal of his own money, therefore was silent.

On our return, when our presents were brought home and delivered to us, Miss Shepherd, after examining the dressing-boxes, exclaimed, "Lord, how very beautiful these boxes are—well, I hope if ever I marry I shall have the good luck to get a Nabob; you are a fortunate woman Mrs. Menville in exchanging a poor half-pay Captain, with a palty three hundred a year, for a man with twice as many thousands, yet you don't seem half sensible of your happiness; O, if I was in your situation I should grow wild with joy in being mistress of such a house and establishment as you possess." "I should pay Mr. Menville a very ill compliment," I replied, "if those circumstances only gave me joy; I assure you, Miss Shepherd, a splendid establishment alone would never have governed me in my preference—I had other motives, I hope much better ones, and Mr.

Menville's fortune was but a secondary consideration with me." "Why, to be sure," said she, "he has provided very handsomely for all your family, that every body knows." "Fie Kitty!" cried the old lady, "how can you be so rude?" O, Madam!" I returned, with, I believe, rather a contemptuous smile, "'tis impossible Miss Shepherd can intend any rudeness or insult, she is too much my friend not to rejoice at an advantage to me, in which she will so largely partake."

You must know, I suspected Mr. Menville had made her some presents the preceding morning, and my conjectures were confirmed by her behaviour at that moment, —she blushed scarlet deep, threw her eyes on Mr. Menville, and appeared at a loss for a reply; he saw her confusion and cried out in a hasty, gay, tone, "my fortune, ladies, will be always at the command of my wife and her friends." You are very kind, my dear sir," I replied, "neither
your

your wife or *her* friends will ever make any improper demands on your generosity."

"That point being settled," said Miss Ellis, "let us call a new cause, and pray, sir, be so good as to give me a little private history of our beaux that attended us yesterday, perhaps I may think it worth while to set my cap at the most eligible of them."

"I am mistaken" answered he, smiling, "if you have not already made a conquest, but as to private history I know nothing—the general character the world gives them is this—Sir William Pritchard is a man of family, and *has had* a very considerable estate, but entering largely into every fashionable amusement and being particularly unfortunate at Newmarket, where I first became acquainted with him, I believe it is pretty deeply involved and his present finances scarcely sufficient to support a genteel appearance; he has an aunt in town from whom he has great expectancies, which occasions his constant residence in London:

he is said to be a man of principle, liberality, and candour—and thus much fair lady for the Baronet. Mr. Martin”——

“O!” cried Miss Ellis, “you forget Mr. Colemore, the Baronet’s friend.” “If I did,” answered he, smiling, “I am pleased to see *you* did *not*, but to confess the truth, I was malicious and intentionally omitted speaking of him in order”—Miss Ellis blushed, he went on—“Mr. Colemore then is a man of fashion, fortune, and character—he is rather apt to be grave and sentimental—his father was a bishop of respectable character and took great pains to form his son’s principles; he was intended for the church, but the death of a distant relation gave him possession of a large and unexpected fortune, he therefore bestowed the living, which had been purchased and held for him, on a deserving, but less fortunate, acquaintance of his, who had a large family. I have not known him long, but the world speaks highly of him; either, I am much mistaken in my

con-

conjectures, or I may be honored with his visits more frequently than usual from the attraction of certain objects which engrossed his attention yesterday. As to Mr. Martin and Mr. Thurkill, they are common characters, they have good fortunes and are fashionable men; their being in town now is rather extraordinary, but they are just come from Tunbridge and I suppose will soon be on the wing for some other time-killing place—*voilà ma chère ami* the history of our visitors and, as you are pleased to call them, your beaus.

Miss Shepherd made a few sprightly remarks on the Parson being a man of the world, and declared “she thought from the stiffness and formality of Mr. Colemore he was a Methodist—poor fellow!” said she, “from being educated for a pious life and now an inhabitant of the gay world, he is unfit for either.” No answer being made, she went on; “the Baronet is a good decent fellow, but Mr. Martin is certainly

the smartest of the group." Mr. Menville and she had a good deal of lively chat, but I could not avoid being surprised a young lady who had been entirely educated in the country should have acquired so much knowledge of the world.

Yesterday we went to Richmond, and a delightful day I should have spent had not that forward girl contrived to engross Mr. Menville so particularly to herself that he forgot even common politeness to Miss Ellis; I see she makes her own observations and is hurt by them, though she has too much delicacy to speak on the subject.

I congratulate you, my dear Mrs. Bertie, on the recovery of your aunt; may you long enjoy that invaluable blessing, a near relation and a true friend; I have this moment a letter from my father, and, as I feared, he declines my invitation; he says, the country is surprised and concerned

ed at the confidence Mr. Menville has placed in Mr. Shepherd, Doctor Ellis thinks him a very worthless man, and though he sometimes permitted their visits he never could esteem any part of the family; the sooner therefore their *visit to me* concluded he conceived the better it would be for us all." I shall here conclude this letter and resume my pen in the evening or tomorrow, as I find opportunity.

I am ever sincerely your's,

EMILY MENVILLE.

LETTER

LETTER IV.

CAPTAIN HARLEY TO MISS ELLIS.

A Thousand thanks to you, my amiable Miss Ellis, for your obliging letter; no one event since I quitted England has given me half the pleasure as that of hearing from my good friends at Sudbury: I have been engaged in some very busy scenes since I wrote you last, as unpleasing as unexpected. You may remember I told you I was engaged to dine with a Spanish grandee, who had two handsome daughters, I was punctual to my appointment and had the honor of being introduced to two very lovely women, the eldest

dest, Donna Antonia, was particularly striking, and a susceptible Englishman would have found it difficult to have resisted her charms, had not his heart been pre-occupied by an object far superior. The ladies behaved with the utmost affability, yet a certain air of grandeur; a consciousness of high birth and beauty created that distant respect which prevented any very social intercourse. I was, however, so fortunate as to render myself agreeable to the noble Count and received a general invitation in terms the most flattering, for which doubtless I was indebted to my friend Clayton, whose uncle I believe you know had formerly been ambassador here from our court. On our return to our lodgings at night, we found the house in a good deal of bustle, and on enquiry was told a gentleman had been brought there from an Inn very ill, a young lady with him in great affliction, but whether wife or sister they could not tell, they were English and appeared like people of distinction.

tion. We found ourselves much interested for our sick countryman, and hearing there was a man-servant, desired to see him; he came though rather reluctantly and in much confusion: I told him, that being informed an English gentleman was in the house much indisposed, I requested he would make our compliments (telling our names) to his master and the lady, with a tender of our services on any occasion that we could be useful in. It was some time before he returned with his master's "grateful thanks, that he was too ill at present to see company, but if he found himself better the next morning he would be happy to make his personal acknowledgments." No name was mentioned nor any notice taken of the lady, who our hostess told us was very beautiful though evidently oppressed with sorrow. The next day we sent to know how the gentleman had rested, and heard his fever was much increased, and the lady almost distracted; we renewed our offers of service but had only a compliment in return;

turn; understanding a physician was with him we waited his coming out, and I took the liberty of addressing him and enquired how he found his patient; he said, "extremely ill, his fever very violent, and evidently in an agitation of mind which impeded the effect of medicine." We were concerned at this unfavorable account, the more so, as we were not permitted to offer any assistance.

We dined out and did not return 'till late in the evening, when my servant told me the lady had been in strong fits, and the sick gentleman had requested to see me; I instantly sent to inform him of my return, and was desired to walk in to his apartment; I followed the servant, the physician was in the room, and by a look he gave on entering, I feared there was much danger; the lady was kneeling on one side of the bed, her face muffled, and hid by the clothes—I advanced to the other side, and making some slight apology

apology for the liberty of offering my services, he turned his head and to my infinite surprise discovered the features of Lord Trueby, formerly in the same regiment with myself—"Ah, Harley!" cried he, in a faint broken voice, "'tis all over with me, I am dying."—A deep sigh from the lady, who fell senseless to the ground, gave a painful interruption to him—he was in agonies—I flew to assist the lady and was almost petrified in beholding the beautiful Mrs. B—, the wife of our worthy Colonel! The physician had her conveyed to another room, and I returned to Lord Trueby. "Oh! Harley," said he, grasping my hand, "what a wretch do you see before you! I have seduced an amiable woman, I have irreparably injured a worthy man and destroyed their peace for ever, and now to die, cut off in the height of wickedness, no reparation, no repentance!—Oh! Harley, what will become of me? He stooped with horror in his looks, I could not speak—he fixed his eyes eagerly on me.

me. "You give me no comfort, you cannot flatter me I shall recover, you cannot bid me hope for mercy—Oh, God! what will become of *me*!—what can be done for the dear, unhappy——!" Here his voice failed him, his lips only moved—the physician returned, he said, "the lady was better and had been persuaded to lie down for an hour or two."—Poor Lord Trueby tried to speak—"save her, protect her," said he, in an earnest, imploring tone of voice—I prest his hand—"compose yourself, my dear sir, I am *your* friend, I will be *her's*—I swear to serve her in whatever manner ~~she~~ shall point out to me." "Then I am satisfied," said he, feebly.

The Doctor having given him a composing medicine, he seemed to doze, and desiring his servant to call me when he awaked, I retired with the physician who I found was a stranger to their rank or circumstances, and I chose he should remain so. "The gentleman cannot I think recover," said he, "and the lady, who I suppose

suppose is his wife, appears so much exhausted by grief and fatigue that I should not be surprised if his death proved fatal to her: it is a very fortunate circumstance that he should so unexpectedly meet an old acquaintance at Madrid—he appears to be a man of quality, and I am certain is under some particular affliction which has increased the disease to such an alarming degree.”

I answered him, “that the gentleman was a person of fashion and fortune, who I believed was travelling for amusement and had no other cause of uneasiness but the dread of leaving his lady in a foreign country: I requested he would pay him particular attention, and not be long absent; he promised both; I left him to seek for Clayton to whom I communicated the preceding scenes that had so greatly surprised and affected me.

The situation of Mrs. B— was truly pitiable, and disarmed that contempt we must

must otherwise have felt for her character; for to be sincere, my dear Miss Ellis, there is that ingratitude in the heart of man, that the moment the object of his wishes degrades herself in his opinion, by losing the respect due to *her own* character, he ceases to esteem her, and when novelty wears off, and the beauty which charmed him becomes familiar to his view, how soon does disgust and coldness succeed! and if that object is *the wife* of another, her broken vows, her ingratitude, a still more odious vice in *your* sex, all conspire to make the man for whose sake she had disgraced herself, despise, and desert her. You see I scruple not to betray the sentiments by which men are in general actuated in their intimacy with your sex; and however base you may think *those sentiments*, you will have candour enough to acknowledge that mankind would not have half the crimes to answer for if women learned to respect themselves, and to "look presumption out of countenance."

But

But if *we* pitied Mrs. B—'s unhappy situation, what must her seducer feel? What must be the sufferings of her deserted husband? I know Colonel B— perfectly, he is some years older than his lady, but a pleasing manly figure, strict principles of honor, with an amiable disposition, and the most attentive fondness for his wife might surely overbalance the drawback of a few years: but, I beg your pardon for this digression, and resume my narrative. Before I went to rest, I returned to my Lord's apartment and found he still lay very quiet, also that Mrs. B— was much better and intended passing the remainder of the night in his room, a bed being made up on the floor.

Soon as I awoke in the morning I sent to know how they had rested, and heard with much pleasure Lord Trueby was better and the fever greatly abated; after breakfast I went to visit him; Mrs. B— was sitting by him, her eyes were swelled with weeping, she looked fullen, and on my entrance

entrance bowed stiffly to my compliment and hastily left the room. The physician came in immediately after, and was wonderfully surprised at the visible alteration in his patient; he said "the fever was now reduced and within the power of medicine; that he knew the crisis was at hand last night, but little expected it would have taken a favorable turn."

Lord Trueby appeared happy in the hopes that were given him of returning health, and when the Doctor left us, told me, "he believed that to the ease of his mind in the promise I had made respecting Mrs. B—, he was indebted for the favorable change in his disorder; but," said he, "she is mortified and displeased at meeting an old acquaintance, and has her fears lest you should inform her husband where she now is."

"Mrs. B— may make herself perfectly easy on that head, I am no officious man
nor

nor do I conceive it can be of any consequence to Colonel B— now in what part of the globe his wife resides when she has deserted him.”

I saw an alteration in Lord Trueby's countenance and therefore changed the subject, he was too weak to talk much, and after sitting half an hour, recommending rest and quiet, I left him. He grew better daily, I visited him often, but Mrs. B— always quitted the room on my entrance; he was now able to sit up and hoped soon to walk or ride. For a day or two I perceived a gloom on his features, he spoke little, and appeared lost in reflection; I had surprised Mrs. B— in tears once or twice and she passed me with very furious looks. One morning that I called in, he was more grave than usual, I thought he might wish for an opening to communicate something, and therefore I observed he did not appear cheerful, and asked if he had any complaints or return
of

of his disorder. "No," answered he, sighing, "I have no bodily complaints, but my mind is very much disordered, and I have for some days wished to consult you on the subject that makes me very unhappy: you have had too much delicacy to question me respecting my intimacy with Mrs. B—, but I think it necessary to be open and candid with you, and then you will be enabled to judge fairly what I can or ought to do. You remember, Harley, how much we all admired the Colonel's young and beautiful wife, and thought him too old for so charming a creature. You were always a sentimental fellow, therefore she made no impression on you."

I always admired her as a beautiful woman, and as a *wife* I *respected* her."—"Well, well, every one has not your resolution and self-denial;" resumed he, "I confess, I was struck with her the first moment of introduction, and you quitting the regiment soon after could not know that

I devoted myself to her entirely; yet, had she repressed my presumption at first, most probably I should have grown tired of the chase, and respected her as the wife of Colonel B— only; but, without being vain, I must say my attentions were so well received that a mutual inclination took place, and I had no reason to regret the happiness of her husband. Whether we were too unguarded, or whether the Colonel's suspicions were roused by the officious observations of others I know not, but he began to cool in his attentions to me, and at last requested she would give up her acquaintance with me in terms very peremptory, and as she termed it, insolent. This decided her inclinations in my favor so strongly that she herself proposed our going off to the continent; I made no objection, and as we conjectured we should easily be traced to France and Italy, besides meeting such multitudes of English, we determined to change our names and reside some time at Madrid. Our plan was

soon put in execution, which was to make a worthy man very miserable, and I own to you, her eagerness to forsake a husband who adored her, and the ridiculous light in which she painted his distress on the discovery, first gave me some compunction, and lessened her influence in my heart; I could not esteem one who had forfeited her claim to it, and her beauty was the only tie that held us together on my side.

Two stages from hence, the wheel of the carriage flew off, and unfortunately it poured torrents of rain: Mrs. B— happily received no hurt—I had a violent blow in my head which stunned me for a moment, but, recovering, I got out of the carriage to assist the servants in replacing the wheel, as the postillion had another linchpin in the chaise; we succeeded in our endeavours, but I was wet through, and when we arrived at Madrid the pain of my head was so violent, that, added to a dreadful cold, I was that night seized with a fever

from which I never expected to recover. Mrs. B—, quite miserable at being in an Inn where the accommodations were so bad, got recommended to this house—with difficulty I was removed to it, and I verily believe the fortunate circumstance of meeting you here greatly promoted my recovery, by making my mind easy; for to leave that unfortunate woman in a strange country, without friends or fortune, was a continual torment to my thoughts, and added to my disorder. Whilst I lay, as I thought, on my death-bed, the injury I had done Colonel B—, to say nothing of too many crimes of the same nature, rose with all its horrors to my view—in that melancholy situation vice appears in all its deformity, and, accompanied with all the terrors of a guilty conscience, the specious names of gallantry and fashion will not avail in that moment to reconcile us to ourselves; I bitterly repented, and determined, if my life was spared, to break off a connexion I now looked upon with horror:

horror: since my recovery I have held my resolution, and having explained my intention to the unhappy Mrs. B—, 'tis with grief I experience only reproaches and repulse from her to all the plans I have proposed for her benefit. She has taken an unjustifiable hatred to you, under the idea that the plans I have proposed to her have been suggested by you—'tis in vain I have assured her, you have never been consulted—she execrates us both, and I have every thing to dread from the violence of her temper, and the uncertainty in what manner I can separate myself from her so as to make *her* easy, and free my own mind from reproach on that head, though I never can forgive myself for the wretched situation into which my folly has plunged her."

Lord Trueby being silent, I warmly applauded his present disposition, since to be sensible of our errors, and endeavor, as far as in our power, to atone for them was

surely praise-worthy; and I entreated him if I could be of any service in his plans not to spare me.

After several consultations on the subject, he executed a deed entitling her to a thousand pounds a year for her life, with half that sum for her immediate use; he befought me to see her and try to reconcile her to a separation his own feelings would not permit him to insist upon. 'Twas an ungrateful office—she had already conceived a prejudice against me, and my interference would confirm her conjectures, yet I could not refuse him; I sent a message to Mrs. B— desiring permission to wait on her, which being obtained, I entered her apartment in some confusion at the business I had undertaken; she bowed stiffly and looked haughtily on me as I saluted her; I apologized for my intrusion as being requested by Lord Trueby to wait upon her and deliver that letter; (giving her a packet he had previously prepared) she received

ed it without speaking, but, opening it, I saw her countenance glowed with rage; scarcely could she have perused it before she tore the deed of settlement in pieces, and, with the utmost violence in her manner, threw them on the floor; then rising and fixing her eyes on me, in which anger, indignation, and every furious passion were expressed.

“Since *you*, sir, have taken this officious, this mean business on yourself, return, and tell my Lord Trueby I equally despise him, his paltry offer, and his impertinent agent; humbled as I am, destitute, and in a foreign country, I will submit to every inconvenience rather than owe pecuniary obligations to a man who can so poorly, so basely desert me. Go, sir, tell this *man of honor*, this creeping penitent, I scorn and detest him, but let him have a care, for *I will be revenged*.” The menace she pronounced with a look so truly diabolical, and a voice so furious, that,

as she quitted the room, I felt an universal tremor. Good Heaven! what a disgusting object is a woman lost to virtue, and given up to the violence of her unruly passions!

Mortified, and uneasy, I returned to my Lord with a resolution to conceal nothing from him; when I repeated the repulse I had met with, he was at first much concerned, but, after pausing some time, "I am no stranger," said he, "to the impetuosity of her disposition, and I know that after her pride and anger is a little subsided 'tis possible she may yet be willing to accept my offers; her love I am sure cannot be wounded though her pride may, by my desire of parting; for I have many reasons to believe I am indebted to her preference of me, more from the gratification of vanity and contempt, and opposition to her husband, than from any real affection; but be that as it may, she shall not upbraid me with leaving her to poverty;

ty; the offer shall again be repeated through a different channel—her maid, who is her great favorite and confidante, may perhaps prevail better than either of us;—” he retired to write a second letter, and I went out in search of my friend Clayton. I had scarcely gone three yards from the house when I saw two persons in the habits of Englishmen approaching towards me, but, good Heavens! how great was my surprise, when on advancing nearer I discovered the person of Colonel B—, the other was his servant; he knew me at the same instant, and exclaimed, in a voice expressive of equal astonishment and pleasure, “Captain Harley! what a fortunate encounter is this!” We shook hands with great cordiality, but, as I too well guessed the business which had brought him to Madrid, there was an embarrassment in my manner which did not escape his observation. “I see, Harley,” said he, sighing, “you are no stranger to the villainous treatment I have received—perhaps have:

seen the persons I am in search of—but can we step into any house, for I long to unburthen my sorrows to some sympathizing bosom, and thank Heaven for this unexpected meeting?”

I attended him to a house of entertainment, with a sad presentiment of what might be the event of this fatal journey; when he was seated, I apologized for a moment's absence, and stepping into another room wrote only these words, which I instantly dispatched to Lord Trueby.

Colonel B— is in Madrid, his errand is easily understood—for Heaven's sake quit the place—add not to the injuries you have already done him by risking an interview, which, whatever the consequences may be, must irreparably injure him for ever.

F. H.

I returned to the Colonel under an agitation of mind not to be described; he
was

was walking up and down the room with great emotion. — “O! Harley,” said he, grasping my hand, “my peace, my happiness are lost for ever! An ungrateful woman, a false abandoned villain, under the masks of love and friendship, have planted daggers in my bosom. — Tell me, have you seen that cursed Lord Trueby, or my unworthy wife? — Wife!” repeated he, stamping, “Blasted be the hour in which I made her such!”

I knew not what to answer—I hesitated; he saw my confusion—“You *have* seen them —” cried he, “I see you have—thus far I have traced them.”

“And to what purpose, my dear Colonel,” said I, interrupting him, “they are equally unworthy your notice or resentment.”

“What! shall I suffer them to triumph in deceiving me? shall I submit to injury, and be insulted with impunity?—No, though I despise *her*, I will be re-

venge on him—life is no longer worth my care—my heart, my honor deeply wounded, I only live to chastise a villain, and care not if I perish the succeeding moment.”

I endeavored, by every argument I was master of, to combat his violent resolutions; I strove to inspire him with contempt for her who had so cruelly deserted him, but I found his affection was too deeply rooted, and his eagerness for revenge too predominant in his mind, to be subdued by reason. I then acknowledged I had seen Lord Trueby, and related minutely every circumstance that had taken place: he heard me with a variety of emotions painted in his countenance, and when I paused——“Unhappy woman!” said he, sighing, “how humiliating, how degrading, your situation! What must be *her* feelings when even *I* can pity her!—but for *Trueby*, no penitence can atone his crimes, he can make no reparation for my injuries, and

and the misery he has brought on a woman, who but for his insidious arts, his pernicious gallantries, might have lived happy and respectable—*him* I never will forgive, nor shall she owe obligations to her destroyer—instantly let me have pen and paper.”

His request was complied with, and whilst he wrote, the big tears strayed down his face and his bosom heaved with sighs:—having finished his task, he requested me to sign it; his servant also was called in as a witness, and when he left the room, the Colonel said, “now Harley, I have done my duty—I have not indeed Lord Trueby’s estate, for mine does not exceed fifteen hundred a year, but by this deed I put her in possession of one thousand of it for life; from this moment, she shall have no temptation from poverty to continue in vice: if I live, the remainder will more than answer for all my purposes, and at my death I leave no relations

to whom my fortune could be any object, since all are amply provided for. If you know her residence let a copy of this be conveyed to her, and let her draw for what sums she pleases for her present support—we must meet no more, but Lord Trueby *I will see.*” He scarcely pronounced those last words when the door opened, and the very identical man entered the room—the Colonel started from his chair—involuntarily I caught his arm—Lord Trueby in the same instant advancing hastily—“You see before you, sir, a man, whom perhaps you think ought to have shrunk from your view—a man who has injured you in the tenderest part; who has no palliation to offer that can soften his offences; no reparation in his power to give, but *one, that only* atonement is *life*, ’tis in your hands, revenge yourself,—I shall make no resistance.”

The Colonel trembled with passion—
“Villain as you are,” cried he, “consci-
ous

ous of the wrongs you have done me, you seek to deprecate my vengeance by throwing yourself in my power—you well know I am no affassin—I scorn to *take* your life. Little as you deserve the treatment of a man of honor, I owe it to my own character to meet you on fair ground; name your time and place sir, and see if you dare justify by your sword the infamy you have committed.”

“No,” replied Lord Trueby, “I *dare not*, there was a time when I might have accepted the terms you offer, but know, sir, I am no longer the same man; the near approach of death has created in me a new soul—the sense I have of the wrongs I have done you, are far more poignant than the point of your sword will be, but never, never, will I raise my arm against the life of one I have so greatly injured: you know *I am no* coward,—’tis from principle, from conviction, I refuse to let you hazard a valuable life against my worthless one.”

Never

Never have I beheld such a conflict of contending passions as then agitated the Colonel—he sat down, rose again two or three times without being able to speak one word—I seized the occasion that offered of interfering, and taking his hand, “my dear sir, permit reason and reflection to subdue a just resentment; you behold a man indeed who has destroyed your peace, but you see also a sincere penitent;—where can be the gratification of cutting off a man who acknowledges, who repents of his sins, and why wish him to add to his crimes by forcing him to the chance of taking *your* life? In the words of an admired writer “If God has given him time for repentance, what right have you to deny it him?”

The Colonel sat leaning his head on the table, at length waving his hand, “Well, sir, leave me, see me no more—at present I submit, but I will not, I cannot answer for myself if we ever meet again.”

“I obey

"I obey you, sir," answered Lord Trueby, "and be assured my feelings at this moment are such as might satisfy your bitterest wishes of revenge. Far from you, my native country and friends, I shall seek to lose the remembrance of my past follies; and by abjuring those pernicious maxims of gallantry which have been productive of so much evil, learn in future to respect the peace of others equally with my own."

He quitted the room, I followed him to the door, "dear Harley," said he, "I shall quit Madrid early to-morrow morning, let me see you for a few moments this evening."

I promised to attend him, and returned to Colonel B—; he was walking the room greatly agitated—"I know not what may be *your* sentiments," said he, but I am dissatisfied with myself; I could not draw on a man unarmed, nor condescend to give him

him a personal insult ; yet, what is his penitence, whether real or affected, to me ? Will it restore the innocence of my wife ? will it bring back my lost happiness ? O ! no, no, he has irreparably destroyed both, why then should I not compel him to give me satisfaction ?”

“ My dear sir,” I replied, “ your own words prove *that* is impossible ; to take his life, or lose your own, could not repair your injuries, much less afford *satisfaction*.”

“ O ! Harley,” exclaimed he, “ you know not my feelings—there, where I had treasured up my soul, there, in that only vulnerable part, to be wounded, ’tis not to be borne !”

I remained with him near two hours, I sought for every argument to soften, though I could not subdue his affliction ; at length he appeared more composed, and at his earnest

earnest request I promised to wait on Mrs. B— in the morning and bring him the result of my visit, as he determined to keep close 'till matters were settled.

After leaving him, I went in search of Clayton, but not meeting with him returned to my lodgings, where I found him with Lord Trueby. I will not trouble you with a repetition of our conversation, which may be easily guessed—I never saw a man more deeply affected than he appeared to be at the Colonel's situation, but as he was desirous of being informed what might be the event of my visit to Mrs. B—, he consented to defer his departure for another day.

I past a sleepless night, Colonel B—'s sorrows were strongly reflected on my own bosom; I knew what it was to be deprived of the dearest object of my wishes, and had the additional misery of having my admiration increased by the very cause which de-

destroyed my peace. Time, and a sense of the indiscretion of Mrs. B—, might heal the wounds *he had* received, but time could do nothing for me, when every moment's reflection convinced me I had lost a treasure scarcely to be equalled.

In the morning I prepared to attend Mrs. B—, on sending up my name I was admitted; I found her pale and dejected, her dress in disorder, and every mark of an agitated mind; she bowed on my entrance, and coolly desired I would be seated; before I had power to speak she thus addressed me.

“I have permitted this visit, sir, to save you and Lord Trueby future trouble, and myself fruitless importunity; my resolution is fixed, since he can desert and give me up for ever in a strange country, I will owe no obligations to so ungrateful a man: I have near four hundred pounds in my possession, a sum sufficient for my present pur-

purpose, therefore once for all, tell him I refuse all pecuniary offers, and from this moment will hear of him no more."

I was for a moment silent, deliberating in what manner to open my embassy from her husband; at length, "I come not, Madam, from Lord Trueby, but from one who is sensible you have a right to his fortune, and has too much pride to permit you should owe obligations to another." I stopt, she started; with terror in her looks, she exclaimed, "*a right* to his fortune? Gracious Heaven! what is it you mean?" I presented the letter, she snatched it eagerly, looked at the address, cried out, "Oh! my God!" and tearing it open, scarcely read three lines before, with a deep sigh, she fell senseless from her chair. I rung for assistance, and endeavoured to support her; her woman entered, and looking angrily at me, "what, sir, have you killed my lady?" I besought her help, telling her it was only a fainting fit, and the

the lady beginning to recover, she forebore any farther marks of her resentment for the present: when Mrs. B— was seated on the sofa, she ordered Miller to retire, and trying to collect resolution, she perused the whole letter. After pausing some time, she said “you are then a friend of Colonel B—s, *that* circumstance accounts for your officious interference between Lord Trueby and myself; hear me out, sir, I condemn you not, the event will prove how far you have done right. Tell Colonel B— I will consider the contents of this letter and to-morrow morning he shall have my final resolution; as his friend, I recommend him to your care—he deserved a better wife—teach him to forget my memory, and be happy. After this time I can see *you* no more, but I forgive and wish you well.”

She arose, and with feeble steps left the room. I felt the sincerest compassion for *her* and my two friends, to whom I hastened,

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ed, and to each reported her present situation; the Colonel was deeply affected, but after I had reasoned him into some degree of composure, I returned to Lord Trueby; he waited for me with impatience, but when I acquainted him with the contents of Colonel B—'s letter, and the effect it had upon her, I never saw a man more completely miserable—one moment he was for flying to her and to convey her away far from all that knew them; then he execrated himself for the crimes he had already committed; in short, I found it a very difficult task though aided by my friend Clayton, to bring him out of a degree of frenzy which might have caused a fatal event if left to himself—little could I foresee the dreadful consequences which ensued! Clayton remained with him, whilst I thought it an act of humanity to spend some hours with the Colonel—great were his agitations, and I left him half resolved to pardon his unhappy lady and receive her once more to his heart.

I rested

I rested but very ill, my anxiety for the conclusion of this business was little short of what the parties concerned must feel: I went early to the Colonel's, he was under the most painful agitations; in less than an hour after I came in, a man brought a letter, the Colonel opened it with a trembling hand, and in a moment cried out "she is dead, she is dead!" and fell back in his chair, neither alive nor senseless, but grasping for breath, and his eyes fixed; with the help of the landlord and some drops he recovered his speech—starting up, "let us fly to prevent this poor unhappy——" he could say no more, but run out of the house, I followed him—we were quickly at the house where the unfortunate Mrs. B— had removed to on the recovery of Lord Trueby; *there* all was confusion, and the sad tale was abruptly told us—the lady had just put an end to her life by cutting her throat! The Colonel fell senseless at my feet; he was carried into a room, which we had no
fooner

sooner entered, than, before I could make a single enquiry, Mrs. B—'s maid burst into the room;—"my lady is dead," said she, wildly, "you have killed her amongst you,—you shall all be hanged—you have murdered my mistress!"

I entreated the mistress of the house to take care of the poor girl, whilst my attention was directed to my still senseless friend; I learnt, however, that the poor lady was actually dead almost instantly that she perpetrated the fatal deed.

It was sometime before the Colonel returned to life and misery—when he could speak, "tell me, dear Harley, have I been in a frightful dream, or is the horrid story true?"

I would have spoke, but my emotions precluded speech; "you are silent, you tremble—all then is over! My rash pursuit has caused her death—what then must

become of me?" He grew very faint—a bed was prepared and I had him conveyed to it—a surgeon, who had been sent for, breathed a vein, and I left him under the care of his own servant and one of the house.

I was requested by the landlord to go into the lady's room and seal up her effects—the scene I saw there I never can forget, and cannot be described; on the table were three letters, one to Colonel B. one for myself, and the third for a friend of her's in London. After sealing up the effects, I retired to another room and opened the letter addressed to me; it contained only three lines, recommending the Colonel and Lord Trueby to my care, as their common friend, and trusting that the sad scene before me would be a lesson for life, to guard me from a commission of such crimes, as, sooner or later, brought their heavy punishment along with them. I was most deeply affected, I pitied the un-

unfortunate victim of her own folly, I dreaded the consequences of this event to my friends, I knew not how to act with respect to the body: in this dilemma it occurred to me to consult the noble Count I mentioned to you at the beginning of this letter: having sent off a line to Clayton to be careful of my Lord, I instantly waited on the Count; he was equally surprised and affected at my story, but with great goodness assured me he would send a proper woman and other persons to attend the body, and insisted upon sending a litter for the Colonel, and to have him lodged under his own care. I felt the warmest gratitude for this unexpected kindness, and frankly accepted his offers; within three hours the Colonel was lodged in his palace, but so entirely unconscious of any thing, that he was taken from his bed, placed in the litter, and comfortably settled in a bed at the Count's, without speaking or moving. I now returned with an agitated heart to Lord Trueby, undeter-

mined what tale to tell; but I was spared the painful relation, for he, anxious to know the result of my visit, had sent a servant to the Colonel's lodgings to enquire for me previous to Clayton's receiving my note; the servant passed the house where those dreadful scenes happened, and being informed of the affair, without considering a moment, imprudently ran back and abruptly informed Lord Trueby of what he had been told. The consequences may be easily guessed, and on my arrival I found Lord Trueby in bed, raving like a mad man and just let blood; he knew me not, and the physician having prescribed, I gladly withdrew to my own apartment to recover from the fatigues of mind and body I had endured within the last six hours.

Retrospections were useless, yet I deeply regretted it had been my ill-fortune to meet the parties in this fatal business, and reflected with horror on the dreadful effects which attended an intrigue too much sanctioned by

by fashion and gallantry, and a breach of the marriage vow so often violated with impunity. I tried to rest but in vain; busy fancy retraced the scenes I had been a painful witness of, and I was compelled to give up all thoughts of repose. I returned to Lord Trueby's room, he was now silent, but appeared to have neither reason nor recollection; I left him to the care of Clayton, and repaired to the Count's: the Colonel had shewn some signs of returning sense by several heavy sighs; I went to the bed-side and spoke to him, he looked at me for several moments very earnestly; "do you not know me, my dear Colonel?" "Yes," said he, with much difficulty, "yes, 'tis Harley."

I was rejoiced that he knew me, I sat by him and administered his medicines, he spoke a word or two several times—the physician came in—he felt his pulse—the poor man put his hand on his breast, "here, here," repeated he, "*all is here.*"

The oppression indeed was very visible—I followed the Doctor to the door, “I fear the case is hopeless,” said he. I returned to my seat—towards the evening he spoke with less difficulty.

“Harley, I wish for a Notary, send for one—where am I?” looking round the very elegant apartment, I informed him of the noble Count’s humanity; he wished to see him—the Count obligingly came in—he tried to express his thanks but was silenced—again expressing his wish for a Notary, the Count ordered his own to be sent for; he soon came—the Colonel strove to exert himself—in a few words he conveyed to me and my heirs for ever, that deed of a thousand pounds a year intended for the late unfortunate Mrs. B—, being two estates in Worcester-shire: the residue of his effects, after paying his debts and all expences whatever, he bequeathed to a young woman he had been god-father to, whose parents were worthy and unfortunate,

fortunate, and to whom an income of near five hundred a year must be a welcome acquisition. I will not fatigue you with painful repetitions; during the night he had many changes; about seven in the morning the oppression on his breast increased, and within a few minutes of ten he breathed his last sigh!

The agitation of my mind for the last two days, the mournful scenes I had been witness to, with this last event, entirely overcame me, and I was obliged to be conveyed to bed, where after some time exhausted nature procured me a few hours rest, and I awoke by two o'clock much refreshed.

I waited on the Count and took his advice respecting the conveyance of the bodies to England, it being the Colonel's request they should lay in one grave. The letter addressed to the Colonel from his unhappy wife now fell into my hands, and was as follows.

MRS. B. TO COLONEL B.

“Before this reaches your hands I can offend no more—I have endeavoured to stifle my own feelings and support a life of infamy, but a sense of shame, of ingratitude, to be pointed at by the finger of scorn, to owe my very existence to the man I have so greatly injured, is not to be borne; I die therefore not so much oppressed with a sense of guilt, as a sense of shame, and a spirit too proud to submit to contempt, or obligations of which I am unworthy. Bred up in fashionable dissipation, before I became your wife I ceased to be virtuous, and when I consented to marry you, it was because I found my reputation was in danger, and because I hoped, under the sanction of your name, to indulge my passions and escape from detection: but a real passion for Lord Trueby made you hateful in my eyes, and I

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solicited him to fly with me—the consequence you know. Good and worthy as you are, I hardly dare hope for pity, much less forgiveness, for I deserve it not, but if there can be any extenuation urged for crimes like mine, I may say, that to the imprudent education I received, to the scenes of vanity, dissipation, and extravagances I was hourly a witness of, and permitted to share in, to these *I* owe *my* ruin, and you the loss of happiness. Adieu for ever, despise my memory, recover your tranquillity, and may the remainder of your days be happy.”

MARIA B.

This letter needs no comment, but may serve as a sad lesson to thoughtless parents and dissipated young women.

The remains of the unfortunate Colonel, and the unhappy victim to her follies, were sent to England, and this long and mournful detail of their fate will be conveyed to you through the hands of the poor girl who follows her mistress's corps to London.

Lord Trueby has settled an annuity of fifty pounds a year on her for life—I have the consolation to say, his health amends daily, but the most profound sadness overwhelms him, and he will, I fear be wretched for life; soon as he is able to travel, he talks of going to Turkey and Egypt for three or four years.

And now, my amiable friend, I shall close this enormous packet, and only trouble you with my best respects to your family,

mily, and, beseeching you to give me every information respecting the happiness of one in whose fate mine is closely linked.

Believe me

your obliged

and grateful friend,

FREDERIC HARLEY.

K 6 LETTER

LETTER XIV.

MRS. MENVILLE TO MRS. BERTIE.

Tuesday Morn. October, 24.

IN my last letter to you, my dear Mrs. Bertie, I mentioned the contents of my father's, the conclusion of which I own accorded with my own sentiments; but alas! I have no voice in the business, and there is every degree of probability my visitors will stay the winter. The bare civility, the cool politeness, with which I am treated is painful enough, yet, as I neither esteem or like them, I should not be much chagrined, but, my dear friend, I am
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considered as a mere cypher, even by Mr. Menville, so lately the passionate lover and tender husband. When I consider that love could be his only inducement to make me his wife; when I reflect on the ardour with which he sought my hand a few months since; when, on a retrospection of my own conduct, I cannot charge myself with one look, word, or deed, that can have caused a change so visible in his behaviour, to what must I attribute an alteration so painful to my feelings, but to the baneful influence others have obtained to my prejudice? Yet, to you only I dare confess what I would fain hide even from myself; to Miss Ellis I affect to appear contented, cheerful, and happy; she views me with solicitude and tenderness on some occasions, which I endeavour to avoid being sensible of—yet the world esteems me fortunate and happy! I will make it the business of my life to *deserve* being so, and leave the rest to Providence.

The town begins to fill I am told, though early in the season; amusements daily increase, and Mrs. and Miss Shepherd are perpetually engaged, with Mr. Menville for their protector. My *situation*, which cannot be concealed, is an excuse for declining invitations to accompany them, which evidently does not disappoint or chagrin either party; but I will have done with this subject, and tell you how greatly I was surprised the other day by discovering accidentally, Captain Harley corresponds with Miss Ellis; she is too delicate to mention his name, and it was only that by searching among some papers for a piece of poetry she had commended, two or three letters fell to the ground; I hastily stooped for them and plainly saw his well-remembered hand in an address to her—few things could make me so happy as to believe there is more than a friendly correspondence between them: I should rejoice to see them united and happy in each other—as she never acquainted me with the
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circumstance, I took no notice of my observation, and shall wait *her* time for the discovery of their mutual regard.

Thursday Morn.

I broke off hastily on Tuesday from the abrupt entrance of Mrs. Shepherd into my dressing room, with a letter in her hand—fury and vexation in her looks; “Lo d, Mrs. Menville, was ever any thing so unlucky! here Mr. Shepherd is very ill of the gout, makes a great fuss, and Benson writes, raves for me, and insists upon my coming down—to be a nurse indeed!—*now*, just as London begins to be tolerable; but I won’t go, I am resolved.”

“I thought, Madam,” said I very coolly, “you only *intended* staying six weeks, and therefore I suppose Mr. Shepherd concluded you were ready to return.”

“You are vastly polite” returned she, colouring, “to remind me of any such thing,

thing, but if I have staid longer it was to oblige my girl and Mr. Menville, I assure you Madam, and I don't know that I shall go now.—She flounced out of the room, and I felt displeased at my momentary petulance, and trying to reconcile myself to her determination with indifference, I went into Miss Ellis's dressing room; she was weeping over a packet of letters which lay before her—on my entrance, she hastily put the sheet she was reading of into her pocket, and locked the rest into a drawer: I apologized for my intrusion, and she resuming a cheerful look, said she thanked me for interrupting her melancholy employment, and chatted on trifling matters 'till the dinner bell rung. On our entering the dining parlour, I thought Mr. Menville and Miss Shepherd looked more happy than usual, whilst a haughty gloom pervaded the features of the mother.

“You know, I suppose, Mrs. Menville, that my mother is obliged to leave us,”
said

said the young lady. "I am sorry, Madam, that Mr. Shepherd's *illness* should occasion it;" I replied.

"I see no such occasion—" cried Mrs. Shepherd, what signifies having the gout—he is used to it, isn't he? *I* can't drive it away." "True, Madam," answered Mr. Menville, but *your* care and tenderness may the sooner restore him."

"Well, *if* I do go," said she, spitefully, my daughter shall go too, so Miss get ready the day after to-morrow, to go into the country. We are going to the Fantocini this evening, and to-morrow I will see one play more before I go."

This speech was very ill received; Miss "thought her presence could not be of any use to her papa." The old lady said, "one was as much wanted as t'other,—and if one went, both must."—A dead silence prevailed all through the dinner hour,
except

except now and then broken by Miss Ellis, and the little attentions I was compelled to pay at my own table. In the evening I was desired by Mr. Menville to accompany the ladies, a favor not often requested of me—I readily complied, but the dissatisfaction of their minds precluded amusement, and we returned to supper, with evident ill-humour on the part of the ladies, though with the addition to our party of Mr. Martin and Mr. Colemore who joined us, and were invited by Mr. Menville to accompany us home. The gentlemen were in high spirits, particularly Mr. Martin, who was very pointed in his attentions to me, meerly I believe because I appeared to be neglected by others. They stayed late—Mrs. Shepherd mentioned, with some indignation, “that she was obliged to leave town next day but one with her daughter.”

“How!” cried Mr. Martin, “rob us of Miss Shepherd? Surely, Madam, you cannot

not have formed a design so cruel?—" "Indeed, but I have—" said she, "if I go, *she* must."—"And where is the necessity for either's going?" asked he. "Why, Mr. Shepherd has the gout, and wants to be nursed, I think."

"It's time enough to talk of this to-morrow," said Mr. Menville, "I hate to talk of parting between friends."

The conversation took a more general turn, though I observed an attention and respect in Mr. Coleman's behaviour to Miss Ellis, which pleased me, as I was inclined to think very favorably of him; but from the disorder I found her in when in her dressing-room, I am inclined to think her heart is ill at ease; however this is only conjecture and I may be mistaken.

When we retired to rest, after some little roundabouts, Mr. Menville said, "I think, my dear, as Miss Shepherd is so very unwilling

willing to quit London, you had better persuade the mother to leave the poor girl behind for a few weeks, to partake with you in the amusements of the town after Christmas."

"If it is your desire, my dear Mr. Menville, I shall certainly speak to Mrs. Shepherd on the subject; but don't you think *your* interest stronger there than mine?"

"No," replied he, with quickness, "'tis necessary the invitation should come from you, unless, indeed——" He stopt, with an air of displeasure; I answered as hastily, "very well, my dear, I shall certainly employ my eloquence to retain the fair lady." I spoke smilingly, and he appeared very well satisfied—the subject dropt, and I determined to execute my commission faithfully, though I own repugnant to my wishes. The next morning I attended the ladies dressing-room, and sacrificed truth to politeness and the wishes of my husband:

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Miss eagerly seconded my request, and our joint petitions were at last favorably heard and acceded to, with a declaration of Mrs. Shepherd's, "that within a month, if her father got well, she would return and take her daughter down."—There was no objection made to this, and I received the thanks of both ladies for my civilities.

When Mr. Menville was informed of the success of my negotiation, he thanked Mrs. Shepherd for *obliging Mrs. Menville*, and permitting Miss to remain at *her* request."

Thus, *I* am the person obliged, you see! In the evening we were at the play—Mr. Colemore and Mr. Martin of our party; the latter was extremely troublesome to me by his attentions which I could not avoid, for my husband confined his entirely to Miss Shepherd, and Mr. Colemore appeared very desirous of devoting himself to Miss Ellis. Towards the end of the play, a gentleman entered the box to whom Mr. Martin paid great respect, and inform-

ed me, in a whisper, it was the Earl of Longfield; he seemed to take a particular survey of the whole party, slightly returned a bow from Mr. Menville, and coolly replied to some trifling chat of Martin's:—he staid, however, 'till the entertainment was over, and made way for me to pass, with respect and politeness. I never saw a countenance so expressive, or greater elegance of manners than appeared in this nobleman: he did not look very young nor in high health, but there was something interesting which engaged you to view him with complacency and respect.

After we returned home, Mr Martin said, "I see Lord Longfield is recovering his health and spirits again—he does not intend *mourning unto death* for the loss of his lady.

"Is he then a widower? I asked."—"Yes," replied he, "and a wonderful example of of conjugal fidelity—quite a jewel
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el of a husband—always dangling by the side of his deary; and when she died, about a year and half since, all the town expected he would follow her—Such grief! such melancholy! He remained in the country, gave himself up to sorrow, and for many months barely existed—his friends have at length roused him from the apathy he was fallen into and dragged him to town, but so altered from the handsome Longfield that was once so captivating, that he looks forty instead of eight and twenty.”

“What an amiable character have you drawn—” exclaimed Miss Ellis, “how few men now a-days deserve such an eulogium!”

“Lord!” said Miss Shepherd, “he must be a poor spiritless creature, or full of affectation—I don’t believe any man in the world would mourn six months for a wife.”

“Such examples are not common, indeed,” replied Mr. Colemore, “but I fear
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the ladies are in a great degree answerable for the little respect paid to their memory."

"How so?" interrupted Miss Shepherd."

"Pardon me, Madam," answered he, smiling, "truth is not always pleasing to a lady's ear."

"O! I will have it," said she. "If you *command* my opinion" he replied, "I must obey you, and I expect to meet your contempt and displeasure when I confess, that I have been a pretty minute observer of your sex, and of married pairs, among my acquaintance, and have met with but very few instances where the ladies, after marriage, think it worth their while to cultivate the esteem of their husbands, or preserve their affection. We have lately adopted the follies of our gay neighbours without copying their virtues.—The ladies marry to increase their consequence—launch into a vortex of dissipation—dress for every
man

man but their husband's;—reserve their smiles, wit, and good-humour for company alone.—Whilst at home, they are flatteringly in their dress and appearance, careless of a desire to please, given up to ennui, anxious to be abroad, dissatisfied at home, prefer every coxcomb to the man who has a claim to their preference, and in a very short time render him the object of pity or contempt.”

“Upon my word, Mr. Colemore,” said Miss Ellis, “if you have such a despicable opinion of our sex you ought *never* to marry.”

“I *never* will, Madam,” he replied, until I am well assured the lady I address has very opposite qualities to such as I have described.”

“But how can you depend on appearances, since you charge the ladies with an entire alteration in their conduct *after*

marriage? asked she—I beg your pardon, I meant not to censure indiscriminately, there are hundreds, I hope, thousands, truly estimable women; and a man who permits his judgment to guide him in the choice of a wife, can seldom be deceived. A young woman, who is a good daughter, a sincere friend, an admirer of real merit, who is cheerful without levity, agreeable without affectation, and sensible without vanity; such a woman must be amiable from principle; she can never fall into those contemptible follies which disgrace her sex, and destroy the happiness of all her connexions.

“Quite a paragon! upon my word, cry’d Miss Shepherd, tossing her head disdainfully, why it was a thousand pities you had not continued in the profession you were educated for; as a clergyman, you might have declaimed from the pulpit against all the fashions of the age, and doubtless have turned the current of folly into the gentle stream of insipidity and dulness.”

“No,

“ No, madam,” he replied, “ I never should have entertained so wild an idea, as to hope any efforts of mine could have engaged the attention of a fine lady ; the best orators, the noblest precepts, are now treated with contempt ; and people in general avoid hearing disagreeable truths ; or, if they should sometimes be unfashionable enough to go to church, their behaviour plainly evinces, they think the preacher insufferably tedious, and after seeing, who and who are together, of their gay acquaintance, they feel every minute an age, ’till the service is ended, that they may meet and form their several parties for the ensuing evening.”

“ Faith, Colemore !” cry’d Mr. Menville, “ you would have made an excellent Puritan, and as you have more than a tolerable person, you would have been the admiration of all the old dowagers, and antiquated virgins.”

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“ Perhaps,”

"Perhaps," said Mr. Colemore, smiling, "I had too much vanity to be satisfied with such a partial distinction, I am an admirer of every charming woman who has a claim to my esteem, and do not despair of being one day distinguished by the preference of an amiable *young* woman of an ingenious heart; capable of doing justice to the sincerity of mine."

"Oh! for heaven's sake," cried Miss Shephard, "no more of this dull stuff; why you are a mere automaton, without the least animation; none but Miss Ellis is qualified for conversation like your's."

"I thank you, madam, for the compliment," said Miss Ellis, "for I assure you, I think it a very high one."

"And I, madam," added Colemore, "cannot wish for many gratifications superior to what I should feel in being heard favourably by that lady."

"Bravo,

“Bravo, bravo!” said Mr. Martin, “but I think the conversation is rather too confined at present, so if you please, we will call a gayer subject, and apropos, did you see in the opposite box this evening, the beautiful lady M——, and her happy favorite? egad, she looked like a divinity; the fashionable world have a thousand obligations to Lord M——, for transplanting the lovely flower from the field to his garden, where every one scents the sweets which else might have been lost in the desert air.”

“You are quite poetical, Mr. Martin,” said Miss Shepherd, “but pray, who is, or rather, who was, this beauteous flower?”

“A curate’s daughter,” he replied, “who, poor man, burthened with a numerous family, placed three of his girls abroad, to provide for themselves; they were devilish handsome, and one being resident near a university, soon caught the attention of a young fellow of fashion and fortune. The girl be-

ing prudent, or cunning, for they are synonymous terms in some cases, the lover was caught in the snare, and married her. Another sister went to Lisbon with a lady, and found a husband in a capital merchant there. The youngest, which is the lady in question, was the most lively, and by far the handsomest; she came on a visit to her sister in town, and one night at Ranelagh, threw her bright eyes on Lord M——, who received such a mortal wound, that he joined the party, sought an intimacy with the family, and in less than two months the parson's lovely daughter became a peeress."

"I rejoice in her good fortune," said Miss Ellis, "and have no doubt but she will deserve the distinction she is raised to."

"Why, as to that," replied Martin, with a sneer, "she does credit to his taste, and graces his table, and that is all an old fellow who marries a young lively girl, can expect; she is wonderfully admired, but among the
many

many candidates for her favour, Captain Bingley appears to be selected as the happy man."

"I hope," said Miss Ellis, "for the honour of the sex, that *her* husband will be the only happy man distinguished by her favour."

"Ha, ha, ha!" cried Martin, laughing, "what antediluvian ideas! why, my dear madam, nothing is so great a bore, as for a married woman to favour her husband; a man of the ton would be ashamed to appear in the circles of fashion, if his deary was considered as a fond wife; or he was supposed to care six-pence for her. There was poor Lord Longfield, so much the jest of all his acquaintance, for his ridiculous attachment to his wife, that they were compelled to withdraw themselves from the world, and bill and coo in the country."

"I should suppose, sir," said I, very gravely, "you cannot mean to recommend yourself to the young ladies, by uttering such free sentiments, and I am sure, married ones who have any principles, must hold them in abhorrence."

"O Lord! madam," cried he, unabashed, "you are a stranger to the fashionable world at present; by and bye, when you enlarge your circle of acquaintance, you will find I speak the sentiments of the multitude."

"Then I shall confine my conversation to a very *narrow* circle, I can assure you," answered I, with a look of contempt."

"You have no occasion, madam, to form a resolution which would be a loss to society," said Mr. Colemore, "I will venture to say, no man of sense will presume, in *your* company, to make use of any language, that can offend your delicacy."

I bow'd

I bowed to Mr. Colemore; at the same instant Miss Shepherd exclaimed, "Lord bless me, I am half dead with the vapours, let us have no more preachments—Mr. Menville, are you asleep?"

"Why, indeed," answered he, "this see-saw conversation is enough to set one a yawning, but happily, here comes the summons to supper, which is an agreeable interruption."

I have repeated this idle chat, merely to give you an insight into the different characters of the two gentlemen, and I feel an increased disgust every moment against Martin, who nevertheless appears a violent favourite with Mr. Menville and Miss Shepherd; whilst the worthy Colemore is treated with common civility only. Mrs. Shepherd sets off to-morrow morning; you will say she has been in no haste to obey the summons of a sick husband; indeed, she does not attempt to disguise the reluctance with which

she leaves town, and as the daughter remains behind, her departure is to me a matter of perfect indifference.

I intended, you remember, to write journal-wise, but some days I have not a moment to myself; for whenever the ladies are at home, they are perpetually breaking in upon me without ceremony; and when accompanied by Mr. Menville, they take their amusements abroad. Miss Ellis and myself mutually rejoice in enjoying a *teté-à-teté*; therefore I cannot be as exact as I could wish. I am interrupted, and must attend Mrs. Shepherd—what a tax is politeness upon an ingenuous mind, when obliged to disguise its feelings! Adieu my dear Mrs. Bertie for the present,

Your affectionate

EMILY MENVILLE.

LETTER

LETTER XV.

ROBERT MARTIN, ESQ. TO JOHN CHAMBERS, ESQ.

FAITH, Jack, you are right, my neglect of you is owing to an attachment of the tender kind ; these devilish women engross all my time, occupy all my thoughts ; and now I have such a charmer in pursuit, as I fear will call forth all my patience, perseverance and artifice, to lure her to my arms. I was violently in love with Lady M—— two months ago, but she has made a selection ; for the present, therefore, I suspend my operations in that quarter, and devote myself

to the fair wife of Mr. Menville; and although she is not quite so beautiful as the former, she is more captivating, with very little knowledge of the world, and is really and truly, I believe, a woman of principle. To warm a heart like her's, would be triumph indeed. I have ventured a few free observations, which were so ill received, that I shall change my batteries, become the humble sighing swain, and as sentimental as herself. Here is a pretty lively girl on a visit to the family, that an honest fellow might gain without much trouble, for she is vain, volatile, and loves a little romping to her heart; but I think there is likely to be a good understanding between Menville and her, and I shall not attempt to interrupt the affair, as it may answer my purpose on the lovely wife: yet I have two great obstacles in my way, which are, *her* prudery, and the keen observant eye of a country parson's daughter; also on a visit; I wish she was safe home, reading homilies, or churning butter

in the dairy ; then, that canting puritanical fellow, Colemore, who, you must remember at college, is for ever crossing me here, and I suspect is fond of the *good* Miss Ellis, like to like you know. Thus you see what mountains I have to climb, before I can enjoy the sweets of the delicious valley I have in view ; but a fellow of spirit likes difficulties, for in the pursuit oftentimes lies the chief pleasure of the chase ; and when *once overtaken*, we generally care as little for the woman as for the game.

You see now, Chambers, I have a world of business on my hands, and cannot at all times find leisure to answer your demands on my pen ; write therefore without ceremony, and for my letters, they shall be forth-coming whenever I have opportunity.

“ How stands your affairs ? are they likely to get settled, that you may return to England ? ” faith, Jack, you got into a cursed
set,

set, and was well pigeoned. I love women better than dice, and if I am sometimes fleeced, the dear creatures are welcome to share the plunder. Farewell, write soon.

ROBERT MARTIN.

LETTER

LETTER XVI.

MRS. BERTIE TO MRS. MENVILLE.

Bath, Nov. 4th.

YOUR letter, my dear friend, which I have so long and so impatiently expected, I am sorry to say, has given me much pain. You are new to the world; you have not, like me, purchased a knowledge of it by painful experience, and from the rectitude of your own heart, ill qualified to judge of the duplicity of others. I wish not to alarm you, yet I cannot be silent on the communications

cations I have received : I am confirmed in my conjectures, that Miss Shepherd is a worthless girl, and a dangerous inmate. Such is the depravity of men, that they will “leave an angel to prey on garbage,” from the natural inconstancy of their disposition ; that girl envies and hates you ; you have superior beauty ; you have virtues she cannot copy ; you enjoy a splendid establishment, which she longs for, to gratify her vanity and taste for expence ; thus every way you are her rival, and I fear her artifices will occasion some confusion, if not distress, in your house. Yet ’tis impossible Mr. Menville can permit her to insult you ; and I am very sure, neither the softness of your disposition, nor your prudence, will deserve to meet any ill treatment. Your situation is so delicate, that I dare not presume to advise you relative to Miss Shepherd ; but I will speak frankly my sentiments of your male friends. That Martin, my dear Mrs. Menville, is a profligate of the most dangerous kind ; I have heard his character, accidentally, from Sir Charles.

Charles Wentworth, and shall relate the incident that gave rise to it.

Attending my aunt one morning to the pump-room, I observed a very decent looking man, with a young woman leaning on his arm, whose death-like countenance, and emaciated figure, plainly evinced she was far gone in a decline ; there were the remains of a lovely face, but grief and sorrow was deeply imprinted on her pallied cheeks. I felt myself interested for her, and seating myself by her side, I said, " I hoped she would find relief from the waters ; " that, madam, replied she, bowing, is what I do not expect, nor am I solicitous for, I came here to oblige my dear father, and am sorry, only on his account, that my disorder is so rooted, and makes such rapid strides, as I think gives not the smallest chance of my recovery."

" Do not say so, my dear Mary," cried the father, earnestly, " only resolve to be well, to struggle against your disorder, and
you

you will get the better of it, the doctor says so."

Just at this moment Sir Charles Wentworth entered the room, and advancing to pay his compliments to us, the young woman caught his eye.

"How d'ye do, Miss Smith?" said he, in a voice of compassion; I hope you are better than when I saw you in town?"

"You are very obliging, Sir," she replied. "I believe I am much the same. Then rising, and politely taking leave,—
"Come, my dear father, I can walk now." And with feeble steps, holding the arm of her sorrowing parent, she left the room.

"Poor girl!" said Sir Charles, with a sigh, "I believe, indeed, your case is hopeless."

"Pray,"

"Pray," cried I, eagerly, "who is she? There is something very interesting about her."

"She is," replied he, "a very worthy young woman, consigned to the grave by a distemper not mentioned in the bills of mortality, a broken heart. Her father, who was with her, is a very eminent hosier. I have dealt with him for some years past, and greatly respected him. About a year and a half ago I frequently met at his house a Mr. Martin, a young man of fortune and gallantry, pretty notorious. Mr. Smith, with great exultation, in confidence, told me that he paid his addresses to his daughter Mary, and he believed the match would soon take place. Knowing Mr. Martin only by his general character, I did not think myself authorized to give any opinion on this information.

"Miss Smith was a lovely girl, modest, sensible, and gentle in her manners. There was

was a probability Mr. Martin might be ferocious in his addresses. Her fortune, I supposed, would not be despicable, although there were three other children. I therefore contented myself with only observing, that Mr. Martin was a young man of good fortune, lived much in the gay world, and I hoped would behave with honour and propriety to Miss Mary.

“ Soon after I left town on a tour to Paris, where I stayed some months. On my return to England, about four months ago, I called on Mr. Smith: he was much altered. I asked if he had been ill. The worthy man was deeply affected. With a faltering voice he requested me to walk into the parlour; and then, the tears running down his cheeks,

“ Ah, Sir Charles,” said he, “ I am a miserable man: I have lost my wife; my poor Mary is, I fear, following her poor mother: and all this misery is brought upon me by
a vil-

a villain, by that Martin, that profligate seducer, who has deserted my child."

"Good God!" I cried, interrupting him, "sure he has not used Miss Martin ill!"

"If to gain her heart," he replied; "if to insinuate himself into the affections of the poor girl; if to obtain the confidence of her mother and myself; and then, because she would not comply with his infamous desires, to desert her, to abuse me, and laugh at our poor low mechanic notions, to ridicule my poor child for her prudery and her assurance, to suppose he ever intended to connect himself with a trader;—if such treatment, Sir Charles, cannot be called ill usage, I know not what the word means. My child fell into fits before the cruel wretch's face, who left the house with a sneer, saying, he had seen that farce played too often for it to have any effect upon him. She was carried to bed in a burning fever, and for three weeks was deprived of her senses. Her mother
never

never left her, night nor day; and, by the time the poor girl was unexpectedly restored to her reason, the fatigue and anxiety she had suffered overpowered a naturally-weak constitution: she was obliged to take to *her* bed, and died in less than a fortnight.

“ This heavy stroke, Sir Charles, had nearly proved fatal to us both. I recovered, but my unhappy child was unable to bear the load of misery which preyed upon her mind. She has all the marks of a rapid decline. The physician says, if her mind could be made easy, she might recover: but I fear that never will be the case. She is now in the country, to try the change of air; but, my dear Sir,” said he, wringing my hand, “ I have no hopes. All this misery is brought upon me by a man of fashion and gallantry. Cursed be the tenets of such pests of society, such barbarous assassins, who endeavour to destroy both soul and body, and send innocent victims to the grave.”

“ The

“ The poor man burst into tears. I was greatly affected by his sorrow, which was too justly founded to be removed by any arguments. I called upon him about a month after: I saw the unfortunate girl, and was inexpressibly shocked at the ravages which grief had made on her person. I said every thing in my power to awaken her reason, and consider her father. Her answer I shall never forget.

“ Do you think me insensible, Sir Charles?” said she. “ Had I been so, this poor frame might have borne the cruel deceit, the insult of a man of *fashion*, who thought it was sufficient honour for a tradesman’s daughter to be his mistress. Alas! *my* heart was but too susceptible of love. I confided in his honour, and with difficulty preserved my *own*. Yet, I thank Heaven, I *did* preserve it, although I lost my reason by his cruel treatment of me, and insolent behaviour to my parents. Yet this *I might* have survived: time and a proper contempt for so worthless
an

an object, *might* have restored my mind to peace, but the death of my dear mother, entirely brought on her by her affection and care of me, was a stroke too severe for my weak frame. I feel I shall soon join her in heaven. I consent to every thing my father wishes; but I know the blow is given, and 'tis all in vain. His distress is all that lies heavy at my heart: but he has other children who are growing up; I hope, to be a comfort to him. I see, Sir Charles," added she, "that you feel compassion for our situation. You are also a man of *fashion*, yet, I hope, far different from the one I have known. Let my unhappy case sink deeply into your mind; and may no poor deserted female; may no wretched husband or father ever have cause to execrate the name of Sir Charles Wentworth."

"You may judge, ladies, what were my feelings for this poor girl. I left her with real sorrow. I enquired after Martin of some persons that knew him, and heard he was just returned

returned from France, and was gone to Tunbridge. I called two or three times to ask after Miss Smith, and heard very unfavourable accounts of her health, but have never seen her since, till this moment; and from her appearance, I fear she will soon meet that death she has long wished for."

Sir Charles here concluded his narrative. My aunt and myself were extremely concerned for the unfortunate Miss Smith, and joined in execrations on the wretch who had so cruelly used her, though, alas! I am afraid there are but too many under circumstances similar to her's, who pine in secret, and drop like a broken lily from its stalk: but surely the day of retribution must overtake those villains, who are worse than common murderers, though there is no punishment for them by our laws, severe enough to petty offenders, whilst the profligate, the ruiner of innocence, the destroyer of domestic happiness, shall be applauded as a man of gallantry, and received into company by the

most virtuous of our sex. Shame on the manners of the age, and to those women who do not look with scorn and contempt on such despicable wretches!

But, my dear Mrs. Menville, I am convinced from concurring circumstances, this Martin is the very fellow whose attentions you dislike; and well may you dislike them. Your good genius, or I should, in truth, say, your judgment, pointed out the great unworthiness of a man who could dare utter such free sentiments before women of character. I need not bid you beware of him, for you must detest him. Was not Miss Ellis with you, I should be very unhappy, for I hate Miss Shepherd, yes, absolutely hate her. Pray Heaven her father may order her down to him.

Mrs. Gaywill and her conceited ape of a son give a public breakfast to-morrow at the rooms. We are invited; and I accepted the invitation in the hope of deriving much enter-

entertainment from the folly of the latter: but folly is more pardonable than vice, and therefore not entitled to the same contempt, though we cannot forbear laughing at the ridicule they incur, by endeavouring to appear for what nature never designed them. My aunt waits for me to accompany her on a visit. Adieu, my charming friend. Think justly of your own merit, follow the dictates of your own heart, and you must and will be happy.

Ever sincerely your's,

CHARLOTTE BERTIE.

LETTER XVII.

MRS. MENVILLE TO MRS. BERTIE.

WITHOUT waiting, my dear friend, for an answer to my last letter, I continue to write; for to unbosom myself, and claim your advice in my present difficulties, is my only consolation.

Yesterday morning Mrs. Shepherd very reluctantly took leave of us: she repeatedly told her daughter, if she found her father very ill, she would send immediately for her; and

and if recovering, she might expect her in three or four weeks in London, to take her down. Miss looked rather grave at this piece of information; but pleasure evidently danced in her eyes when the carriage drove from the house. Very soon after Mr. Martin and Mr. Thurkill were announced, The latter gentleman has frequently dined here of late, and has paid great attention to Miss Shepherd; but I have not observed any partiality on her side: she seems to flirt with every one alike. They proposed going to Kensington Gardens: I desired to be excused, intending to write my father and yourself. Miss Ellis, at my request, accompanied them. They had scarcely left the house, when I was most agreeably surprised by a visit from my dear brother Harry: but my satisfaction was of short duration, when he informed me, that my uncle had in Devonshire formed a connexion with a farmer's daughter, whom he had brought with him to town, and he believed intended to marry, as he had that very morning made him a

proposal of going to India, instead of entering him in the Temple, as was first intended. "Indeed," added Harry, "if he makes good the advantageous terms he talks of, and can procure me the appointment, I shall greatly prefer the situation to the study of the law, and I see plainly he wants to get rid of me."

This information gave me much uneasiness. Harry was ever dear to me. The promises my uncle had made in his favour weighed much with me on a certain occasion. I was grieved to think of parting with him for so long a voyage. He saw my emotions; and, tenderly pressing my hand, "Do not be uneasy, my dear sister: the same gracious Providence protects us every where. I feel not the smallest repugnancy to acquiesce with my uncle's wishes: on the contrary, except the pain of parting from my father and yourself, to go abroad will not cost me a single sigh."

I pressed

I pressed him to stay dinner, and endeavoured to reconcile myself to a separation which I foresaw would soon take place. Mr. Menville and his party returned all to dinner at a late hour: apologies were made for dishabille by the gentlemen; the ladies shook a little powder in their hair, without time for any other alteration. My husband received my brother with much kindness: I was gratified by his attention to him, and tried to rally my spirits, and entertain my guests with cheerfulness. We were, indeed, apparently very happy, and pleased with each other. At tea, only Harry and Mr. Martin joined us; and a party was proposed by the latter, to go and see Mrs. Jordan in Beatrice, (the Pannel.) Harry pleaded an engagement at ten o'clock; and I, having already seen the piece, declined the invitation. But soon after, Mr. Menville and Thurkill entering the room, Miss Shepherd exclaimed, "Lord, Mrs. Menville, I wish you would go to the play; what signifies having seen it before.

M 4.

It.

It will amuse one for an hour or two ; and that's all we wish for."

The two gentlemen just come into the room caught eagerly at her words, and in short, having intimated in a whisper to Miss Ellis, that I wanted some conversation with my brother, the whole party went off for Drury-Lane. They had scarcely left the room, before Harry, looking earnestly in my face, cried, " Pray, sister, what makes you keep that Miss Shepherd here ? I hate that girl : so much levity and art I never saw equalled. I never could have supposed a character like her's was fit to be a chosen friend for you. Young as I am," added he, " I can see *through* her ; and I wish from my soul you would send her home."

" Upon my word, brother," answered I, smiling, (with an aching heart,) " you pretend to vast penetration : but do not judge with that decisive air which too often accompanies

companies the judgment of young and weak minds. You know so little of the lady in question, that you must pardon me if I think your opinion of her too hastily formed."

"For your sake," replied he, gravely, "I hope it may be so. I am not, indeed, much acquainted with your sex; and 'tis my sincere wish that I may in this case judge erroneously."

The subject now changed to his East India prospects. He said his uncle had promised he would fit him out completely as a gentleman, procure him a writer's place, and give him a thousand pounds to trade with; that he had written to his father on the subject that morning, and should be determined by his advice and opinion.

We parted some time before the return of Mr. Menville and his friends, who came home in high spirits. Mr. Martin complained of my cruelty in refusing to share in

the amusements of the evening. I made a slight reply ; but was surprised to observe a particular civility from Mr. Menville to Miss Ellis, and a mighty good understanding between Mr. Thurkill and Miss Shepherd : I was therefore plagued with the attentions of Martin.

This morning at breakfast, Mr. Menville proposed a party to Windfor on horseback. My situation of course excluded me : Miss Ellis declined the invitation. " Well," cried Miss Shepherd, " I should like it of all things ; and since these ladies refuse, I dare say Miss Chambers would like to go. You know Thurkill will be here presently to hear our plan ; and I will send him on to make her get ready."

" Then this plan," said I, carelessly, " was predetermined on yesterday."

" No, not absolutely," answered Mr. Menville ; " it was merely hinted at."

You

You must know this Miss Chambers is distantly related to the Shepherds, a chamber milliner, a very decent looking young woman, but, I believe, under some pecuniary obligations to the Shepherds, as they treat her with great hauteur and familiarity, whilst her modest deportment challenges civility and countenance. Unhappy is that situation which makes the unfortunate dependent on the caprice of those, whose only advantage is perhaps the possession of a little wealth they are wholly undeserving of. To make short of the matter, Mr. Thurkill came in, was dispatched on his errand, and quickly returned with the lady's compliance; and in high spirits they soon set off. Miss Ellis retired to her dressing-room to write; and I was about to follow her example, when the servant announced Mr. Martin.

“ My dear Mrs. Menville,” said he, approaching me in a very familiar manner; “ is it possible I find you alone! How I hate Menville for gallanting that wild girl.

about the country, and neglecting his charming wife!"

"If you mean any compliment to me, Sir, at the expence of *my husband*," I gravely replied, "you have entirely mistaken my character. Mr. Menville is so thoroughly indulgent to my wishes, that he never takes any step but what is perfectly agreeable to me; and I think myself much obliged to him for attending *my* friends, when I cannot make it convenient to accompany them myself."

"Devil take me, if *I* think so," returned he; "but you are an unfashionable wife, fond of your husband, fond of home, and indifferent to the admiration you excite, and the pangs you occasion in the bosom of your adorers."

"A pretty rhapsody!" said I, affecting to smile. "You gay men of the world make

make no difference between young women and old married ones : but I am not to be spoiled by flattery, and at present have a particular engagement: you will therefore excuse my absence." I rang the bell; the servant entered; Martin looked like a fool, but bowed, and left the room.

This is now, my dear friend, the unpleasant situation I stand in, compelled to see this impertinent coxcomb, and behave as usual to him; otherwise, it may be observed by Mr. Menville, and lead to disagreeable explanations. The subject is too delicate for me to mention, even to Miss Ellis; to you only I dare open my heart, and apply for advice, under circumstances to which you are no stranger. Another care occupies my mind: I every day look forward to an event which may bring me new duties, or perhaps call me to the land of spirits. I am at times very low, yet I endeavour to appear cheerful, particularly to Mr. Menville, who ex-
presses

presses earnest wishes for a *son*. May every thing happen which can give him pleasure. Let me hear from you soon; and believe me;

Ever your's,

EMILY MENVIL B.

LETTER

LETTER XVIII.

CAPTAIN HARLEY TO MISS ELLIS.

WHEN last I wrote my amiable friend, I was extremely low, and exhausted by the fatigues I had undergone; but my troubles and difficulties have since augmented. Within a week after my last dispatch, Lord Trueby quitted Spain, with a mind deeply depressed by remorse and affliction. I had met with such disagreeable occurrences, that I was very anxious to leave Madrid; and Clayton promised to accompany me in
a few

a few days. Gratitude and politeness carried me frequently to the Count's. The charming Antonia received me always with evident satisfaction: not so, Donna Isabella; ill-humour and haughtiness sat on every feature; and whenever I ventured on any subject to express my sentiments, they were sure of a flat contradiction from her. A conduct so marked by contempt, excited me one day to enquire of Antonia, how I had been so unhappy as to incur the displeasure of her sister.

“ You are an Englishman and a protestant,” replied she: “ from the narrow principles of her governess she has unhappily imbibed a violent hatred to both appellations. I resided with an aunt, some miles from Madrid, until the death of my mother: she was liberal-minded and charitable: she taught me to hate no man for his country or religious principles. ‘ Education, my dear niece,’ she used to say, ‘ forms our mind, and fixes our religion. Born in England,
we

we had been protestants : the English, born and educated in Spain, would doubtless have been catholics. Good men and women of every nation, my dear niece, are entitled to our respect and esteem.'—"From her precepts," added the lovely Signora, "I have learnt to esteem Captain Harley: from those of a contrary tendency, my sister has imbibed prejudices which no merit can alter."

The very next evening, which I had spent at the Count's by his particular request, returning home, I was within a few yards of my own lodgings, when I was suddenly beset by three men, who made repeated thrusts at me. Having my sword, I endeavoured to defend myself; but doubtless should have been overpowered, had not a party of serenaders come up most opportunely to my assistance. The assassins fled, but not till I had received two deep wounds; one in my shoulder, the other on my left hip. The persons who came so timely to save my life, con-

conveyed me fainting into the house. A surgeon was sent for, and my wounds dressed, which he pronounced dangerous. The next morning I had a visit from the Count. He had heard of the accident, or rather assassination, and came with expressions of the kindest concern for himself and eldest daughter. I was too ill to acknowledge the honour he did me; and continued for four days in a very doubtful state. The fifth my surgeons gave me hopes of recovery: and, in short, at the expiration of nine days I was pronounced out of danger; the fever was reduced, and the wounds in a very favourable way. The tenth morning after my illness, my servant brought me the following letter.

ANTONIA TO CAPTAIN HARLEY.

“ AH! Captain Harley, I shall never forgive myself. I have been, though innocently, the cause of the vile outrage you have met with. Jealousy, in this country, is often attended

attended with fatal effects to the object of it. The Duke de Solis has long loved me; but his passion was to me detestable; his character, his person, his principles, all were disagreeable. With my sister he was a favourite: she warmly espoused his interest. Unhappily, the civilities which your merit demanded, she imputed to a different cause. She more than once upbraided me for a degrading partiality, which no assertions of mine could remove from her mind. She acquainted the Duke with her conjectures. He, proud, revengeful, and furious, resolved to have you murdered. You know what followed.

“ Yesterday morning one of the Duke’s servants informed my maid of his master’s crimes; insolently adding, “ that, although you had escaped *this* time, your life should be the forfeit, if you dared to visit me.” This menace, from another man, I might have despised; but I know the Duke: and
under

under that conviction I have of his baseness, I beseech you, (however reluctantly, for *indeed it is* with reluctance I make the request,) I beseech you to leave Madrid. I should be the most miserable of human beings, if any accident happened to you; so would my father. O, then, most amiable man, leave us: quit your sincere friends: spare us the affliction, the misery of being the cause of your death, a reflection I never could survive. That detestable Duke! I never will be his: a nunnery or death is far preferable to that thought. Adieu, then: do not forget us: perhaps in happier days we may meet again. Yet, no! that is a felicity I can never, never hope for. Adieu, then, forever, amiable Harley; hasten from Madrid, if you wish me peace; and may your God, and my God, who is the same beneficent Being, ever bless and preserve you.

ANTONIA."

Judge

Judge, my dear Miss Ellis, how I was affected by this letter. I determined to follow the advice of the charming writer, and quit Spain. Clayton readily fell in with my views.

The first moment I could bear the carriage, I was conveyed to the Count's palace. He took a very affectionate leave of me: and when I advanced to pay my respects to his daughters, the lovely Antonia could not command her emotions. She burst into tears, and, with a blessing scarcely articulate, left the room. Her sister followed, with a cold compliment and averted looks. We returned to our lodgings. My heart was deeply oppressed; but the next morning we quitted Madrid, where I had seen only distress and melancholy scenes; and we resolved to bend our course towards Switzerland. After a long and tedious journey, we are now safely arrived at Geneva.

I will not attempt to entertain you by any description of the hair-breadth escapes we had in our travels; much less with an account of the countries, towns, and villages, we passed through. Every place is already so well described in the writings of many eminent men, that I will not trespass on your time and judgment by less accurate observations. Besides, to say truth, my heart was too much occupied in its sorrows and painful reflections, to admit of amusement, even from some very beautiful and wonderful scenes which passed under my eye, though few could exceed, or indeed equal, the enchanting spot we now reside at. We have hired a house on the banks of the lake; and here, in a mild evening, the parting sun playing on the water, the happy rustics dancing on the banks, the view of the city on one side, and the wild romantic hills on the other, are altogether truly picturesque and beautiful.

In

In your last letter, my dear Miss Ellis, you inform me of your arrival in town, and kindly give me an entertaining account of your several visitors. It is not my custom to speak freely of the ladies; yet, I must own, I do not like Miss Shepherd; and why Mr. Menville should select such a companion for his amiable wife, I cannot divine. I think it rather singular, too, that your visitors are all of the male kind; but perhaps, by this time, your society is enlarged.

My heart is always with *you*; and I never can sufficiently acknowledge the friendship of my worthy Clayton, in attaching himself to a companion so melancholy, and so little capable of profiting by his kind endeavours to amuse me. *Your* letters are the only pleasures which affect my soul; and though accompanied by painful emotions, yet these pains are far more desirable than any amusements the gaiety of the world can offer.

Write,

Write, then, my sweet friend; write, I conjure you, *very* often. Probably we shall remain some time here; but, wherever we go, whatever country we shall inhabit, my mind, my thoughts, will be invariably fixed on you and your beloved companion. May every blessing Heaven can bestow attend you both.

FREDERIC HARLEY.

LETTER

LETTER XIX.

MRS. BERTIE TO MRS. MENVILLE.

I HAVE this moment received your letter, my dear Mrs. Menville, but I postpone my remarks for the present, until I have acquainted you with some particular occurrences which have happened to myself.

In my last, I informed you of Mrs. Gaywill's public breakfast; my aunt and self attended, a very large company was assembled, and to do the lady justice, the tables were set out very elegantly. Mrs. Hamwood and

her two daughters, who I mentioned to you as our next door neighbours, were of the party ; they were dressed in a most extravagant style, shewy, tawdry, and expensive, but not genteel ; however, young Gaywill, who is quite a coxcomb in dress, appeared particularly delighted with the two young ladies ; the youngest is really a pretty girl, and not quite so affected as the mother and elder sister ; but the latter attracted Gaywill. His mother (who I suspect of a design on *me*, though older than her son) was greatly mortified at what she called a strange preference ; but alas ! for the first time she found her authority disputed ; the young man stuck close to the lady ; she was obliged to bustle about, and pay attention to every body herself, and as it fortunately happened, no one present regretted the preference, the entertainment passed off very well ; the happy young lady, gratified by the great attention of the founder of the feast, swam about the room with such exultation, that really it was diverting to the highest degree. Sir Charles

Wentworth, who was of our party, had been called off by some gentleman; he now approached us with an elderly man of very respectable appearance; he fixed his eyes on me with such an expression of earnestness, that I felt extremely confused; Sir Charles introduced him as a particular friend of his, just arrived from the continent, but never named him, which I then thought extraordinary: however, we left the entertainment together; they conducted us home, and being invited by my aunt, entered the house. After we were seated in the drawing-room, Sir Charles came up to me, and with a serious look, said,

“Do not be alarmed, madam, if I presume to introduce, in the person of my friend, a gentleman who claims a connexion with you, and longs to embrace you as a near relation.”

“A relation of mine!” I exclaimed,
“for heaven’s sake, what is his name?”

The gentleman now arose, and advancing, took my passive hand, and bowing on it, "My name, dear lady, is Sackville; I came from Lisbon, and presume to claim you as my niece."

"Mr. Bertie's uncle! I faintly articulated;"

"Yes, and your's also, if you will allow me the title," he replied.

I endeavoured to recover myself. "You do me an honour, sir, I will try to deserve; it will be my pride to be found worthy the distinction." My aunt payed him every civility and attention. He told us, that having lost an only daughter, about eight months ago, it had greatly impaired his health; and Lisbon growing very hateful to him, where every object reminded him of his misfortune, he took the resolution to come over to England, and enquire after me, as he had no relations alive, neither in the West-Indies nor
in

in Lisbon. That taking Bath in his way to London, he had met with Sir Charles Wentworth, whom he had formerly known abroad; and being persuaded to accompany him to Mr. Gaywill's breakfast, had the pleasure of hearing I was there, but did not chuse to be introduced too abruptly, nor in the public room.

You may be assured, my dear Mrs. Menville, that after the first distressing sensations were over, I rejoiced in the acquisition of a relation so worthy and respectable. My uncle and aunt were delighted with him, and he spends most of his time in amusing the former, who, I am grieved to say, receives no benefit from our Bath excursion. Yesterday morning I was in the breakfast parlour alone, when Mr. Sackville came in; he seated himself by me, and after a little common chat, said, "I feel highly gratified at the compliment you pay to the memory of my unfortunate nephew, by refusing, as I hear you have done, so many advantageous offers,

and by your very kind reception of me. He well deserved to be remembered, for never man spoke in such raptures of a woman, as he used to do of his charming wife. I beg your pardon my dear niece, for giving you those emotions (I could not command my tears) but there is a man, and the only man I know, deserving you, or worthy to succeed poor Bertie, which is Sir Charles Wentworth."

"Sir Charles Wentworth," I exclaimed.

"Yes, my dear madam, he loves you with the tenderest affection; but supposing himself and fortune unworthy your acceptance, has condemned his tongue to silence, yet I am sure you have judgment sufficient to discover his merit; and as to any difficulties on the score of fortune, thank heaven I can remove them; tell me then, my dear niece, what is your opinion of Sir Charles?"

"Indeed

"Indeed, sir," I replied, "I am so much agitated by the first part of your address, as to be entirely incapable of answering to your question, which is very unexpected."

"Well," said he, rising, "I will not press you farther now, but pray consider what I have said on a subject very near my heart, and on which depends the happiness of a most worthy man whom I greatly esteem."

When he left the apartment I was deeply affected; the remembrance of Mr. Bertie, which he had revived in a very painful manner; the abrupt information respecting Sir Charles Wentworth, of which, I declare to you, I had not the smallest suspicion, altogether rendered me incapable of following him to the drawing-room. I retired to my own apartment, and did not join the company 'till summoned to dinner. As nothing particular was addressed to me, I recovered my spirits, which soon after suffered a dreadful alarm;
the

the table was scarcely cleared, when my uncle, with a heavy sigh, fell from his chair in a fit; you may easily conceive our terror; near three hours passed before he was perfectly restored; I sat up all night, as my aunt could not be persuaded to go to bed; thank heaven he is much better this morning. Sir Charles and Mr. Sackville persuade him to try Bristol, and afterwards to take a journey to the Spa; he inclines much more to visit Lisbon, but from that voyage they earnestly dissuade him; I suppose his determination will not be very sudden, but I hope he will have no return of his late attack.

And now, my dear Mrs. Menville, I turn to your letter, where almost every line gives me concern; that you should be obliged to invite that Miss Shepherd is a horrid thing, and yet certainly it was most prudent to comply with your husband's request; but permit me to give you one hint, which is, that as far as your situation will admit of it without
over

over fatigue, I would advise you to be of their pleasurable parties ; I could adduce many reasons in support of that advice, but as they might not be very pleasant in their applications, I refer to your own good sense and judgment, to discover the motives which induce me to make the request. Should my uncle determine to go abroad, I as certainly shall determine to accompany him, for I would not leave my aunt to bear her anxiety alone, for the world ; but in that case, I will steal two or three days previous to our departure, and fly to London, that I may embrace the friend of my heart, should the metropolis not be in our route. Adieu, my dear Mrs. Menville ; pray continue to write on without restraint, 'till you hear from, or see me.

Ever your's,

CHARLOTTE BERTIE.

I am this instant informed, beau Gaywill is gone to Scotland with the eldest Miss Hamwood ;

wood; dear me; "What will mamma Gay-will say to a match with a cheefsemonger's daughter?" *her* son, who was in *her* eyes deserving of a duchess—they have made quick work of it.

END OF VOL. I.



JUST PUBLISHED,
THE
NOBLE ENTHUSIAST;
A
MODERN ROMANCE:
IN THREE VOLUMES.

I took it for a fairy vision
Of some gay *creature* of the element,
That in the colours of the rainbow *lives*,
And plays i' th' plighted clouds.

MILTON.

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AT THE
Minerva Press,
LEADENHALL-STREET.
M DCC XCH.

JUST PUBLISHED,
FREDERIC AND LOUISA,
A NOVEL,
IN FOUR VOLUMES,

BY THE AUTHOR OF ADELINE.

Here graceful youth and noble fire engage,
And there the mild benevolence of age.
Alternately they sing, alternate flow,
Th' obedient tears—melodious in their woe :
While sadder sorrows swell from each full heart,
And nature speaks at every pause of art.

HOMER.

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AT THE
Minerva Press,
LEADENHALL-STREET.

M DCC XCII.